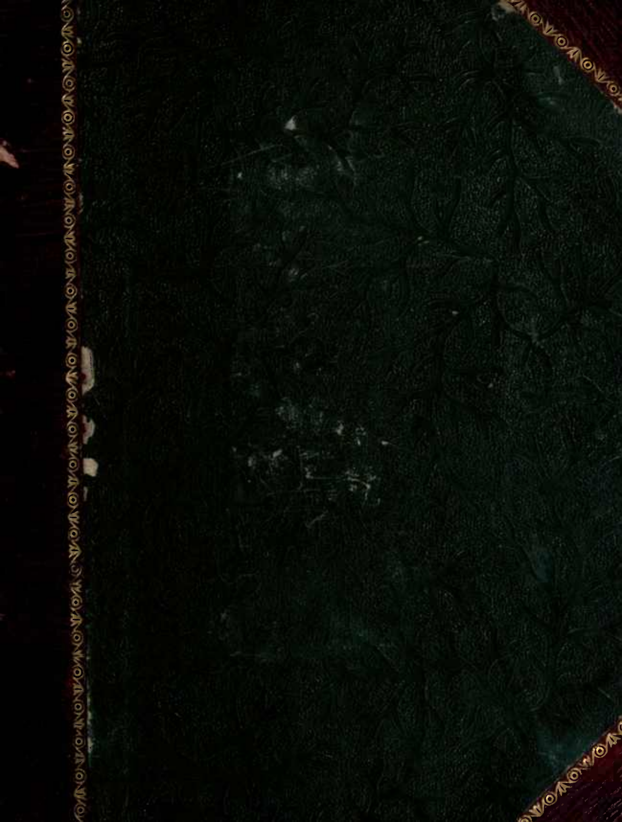

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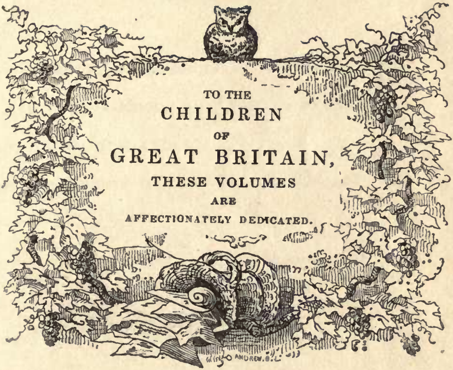

TO THE
CHILDREN
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,
THESE VOLUMES
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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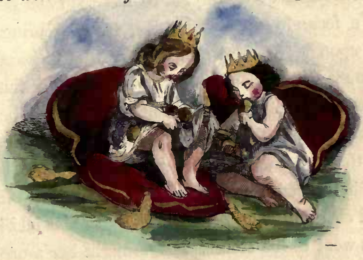
PRINCESS ROSETTA.

THERE was once upon a time, a king and queen, who had two fine boys. As they increased in size, they became beautiful as the day; *so well were they nurtured.* The queen never failed



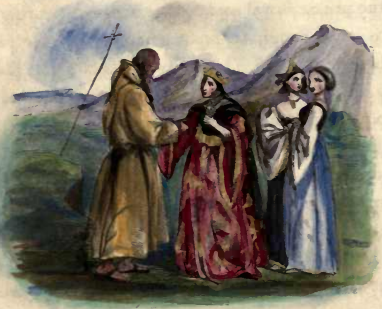
to invite the fairies at the birth of her children, and she always begged her visitors to tell her what would happen to them.

After awhile she had a beautiful little girl who was so pretty that it was impossible to see her without loving her. The queen, having regaled all the fairies who came to see her on the occasion, said to them, as they were about to leave: "Do not forget your usual custom, but tell me what will happen to Rosetta," which was the little princess's name. The fairies told her that they had left their conjuring-book at home, and that they would come to see her again, another time. "Ah!" said the queen, "that forebodes no good, you do not wish to afflict me by an unhappy prediction; I pray you however to conceal nothing from me, but tell me all." They tried hard to excuse themselves; but this only made the queen more anxious to know her daughter's destiny. At last the chief fairy said to her: "We fear, Madam, that Rosetta will bring a severe misfortune upon her brothers; that they will even be put to death on her account. This is all that we can foretell of this beautiful little girl, and we are very sorry that we have not better news to give you." They then left her; and the queen remained so sorrowful, that the king noticed it. He asked her what was the matter. She replied, that she had gone too near the fire, and had burned all the flax off her distaff. "Is that all?" said the king. He went to his stores, and brought her more flax than she could have spun in a hundred years.

The queen was still sad, and the king asked her again what was the matter. She told him that as she was walking by the river, she had let one of her green satin slippers fall therein. "Is that all?" said the king. He immediately summoned all the shoe-makers in his kingdom; and took the queen ten thousand slippers made of the same material.

Still the queen was not consoled, and the king asked her a third time what was the matter. She said that eating too fast she had swallowed her wedding-ring. The king knew that she was not telling him the truth; for he had the ring about him; so he said to her: "My dear, you are telling a falsehood, here is your ring, which I had in my purse." The lady as may be supposed was vexed to be caught telling an untruth, (for it is the most wicked thing in the world), and she saw that the king was angry; so she told him what the fairies had predicted of the little Rosetta; adding, that if he knew any means of preventing it, he must tell her. The king, much grieved at this, replied: "My dear, I know of no other means of saving our two sons' lives, than putting Rosetta to death, while she is yet in her cradle." The queen, however, said that she would rather suffer death herself, than consent to so cruel an action, and begged her husband to think of some other remedy.

While the king and queen were still thinking on this subject, the queen was told that there was, in a large wood near the town, an old hermit, who lived in a hollow tree; and that he was consulted by people far and near. She said: "I must go then and consult him also, as the fairies have told me the evil, but they have forgotten to tell me the remedy." So the next morning she rose early; mounted a pretty little white mule, whose shoes were of gold, and left the palace accompanied by two of her young ladies, who each rode on a nice horse also. When they were near the wood, the queen and her young ladies alighted, and sought the tree where the hermit lived. He did not like to see women; but *when he perceived that it was the queen, he said to her: "you are welcome;* what do you want with me?" She told him what the fairies had said of Rosetta, and asked his advice. He directed her to shut the princess in

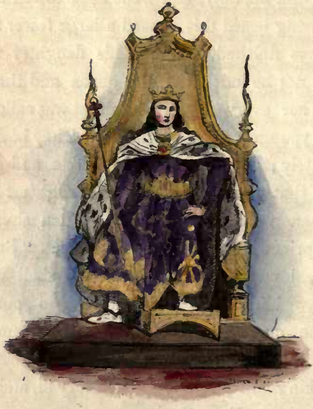


a tower, and never allow her to leave it. The queen thanked him, rewarded him liberally, and went back to tell the king.

The king having heard this, caused a large tower to be erected and when it was finished, confined his daughter therein; but that she might not be lonely, he, the queen and the two young princes visited her every day. The eldest was called the Prince Royal and the youngest Prince Orlando. They both loved their sister passionately; for she was the fairest and the sweetest tempered girl that was ever seen: her slightest glance was worth more than a hundred crowns. When she was fifteen years old, the prince Royal said to the king: "Surely father, my sister is old enough to be married; shall we not soon celebrate her wedding?" Prince Orlando put the same question to the queen; but their majesties amused them, without replying directly on the subject of the marriage.

At last the king and queen were taken very ill, and died, nearly about the same day. Every body was very sorrowful, and went into mourning; the bells were also tolled throughout the kingdom. Rosetta was inconsolable at the death of her kind mamma.

When the king and queen were buried, the noblemen of the kingdom placed the *Prince Royal on a golden throne,* set with diamonds; put a handsome crown on his head; dressed him in violet-coloured velvet clothes, spangled with suns and moons;



and then all the court cried three times: "Long live the king." Nothing was thought of but rejoicing.

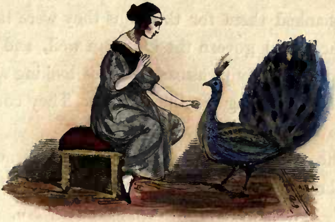
The king and the prince said to one another: "Now that we are the masters, we may surely liberate our sister from the tower where she has been so long, and so melancholy." To reach the tower they had only to cross the garden, in a corner of which it was built, very high indeed; for the deceased king and queen had intended her to reside there all her life. Rosetta was embroidering a fine gown on a frame which stood before her; but, when she saw her brothers, she rose, and, taking the king's hand, said: "Good morrow, Sire; now that you are king, and I am your little servant, I entreat you to remove me from this tower, where I am very, very solitary." She then began to cry. The king embraced her, and told her to dry her tears: for he had come to take her to a fine castle. The prince, who had his pockets full of sweet-meats, gave them to Rosetta and said to her: "Come, let us quit this ugly tower; the king will soon find a husband for you; so do not afflict yourself."

When Rosetta saw the nice garden, *full of flowers, fruits* and fountains, she was so surprised that she could not say a word; for she had, till then, never seen any thing of the kind. She

looked all round, walked a little way, stopped, and then gathered fruit from the trees, and flowers from the parterre. Her little dog, Fretillon, who was green like a parrot, had only one ear, and who danced to admiration, ran before her, barking *"bow, wow, wow,"* with a thousand leaps and capers.

Fretillon very much amused the company; but all at once he ran into a little wood. The princess followed him, and never was any one more surprised than she was, at seeing in this wood a large peacock, which, with its tail spread out, appeared to her so beautiful that she could not take her eyes off it. The king and the prince who soon came up with her, asked her at what she was so much amazed. She showed them the peacock, and asked them what it was. They told her that it was a bird, of a kind that was sometimes eaten. "What!" said she, "do they ever kill and eat so beautiful a bird? I declare to you that I will marry no one but the King of the Peacocks; I shall then be queen, and I will take care that no peacocks are eaten." It would be impossible to express the king's astonishment. "But, sister," said he to her, "where shall we find the King of the Peacocks?" "Wherever you please, Sire," said she; "but I will marry no one but him."

After she had taken this resolution, the two princes took her to their castle, where they were obliged to take the peacock also, *and put it in her room*, for she was very fond of it.



All the ladies who had not seen Rosetta, hastened to seek an introduction, to pay their court to her; some brought her sweetmeats, some sugar plums, others rich gowns, fine ribbons, dolls, embroidered shoes, pearls and diamonds; she was feasted every where; and she was so well behaved and civil, kissing her hand and curtseying whenever anything was given her, that there was no one but was pleased with her.

While she was discoursing with her company, the king and the prince were considering how they should find the King of the Peacocks, if there were one in the world. They came to the determination of having a portrait taken of the princess Rosetta; and they had it done so beautifully that it only wanted speech. They then said to the princess: "Since you will only marry the King of the Peacocks, we are about to seek him for you, all over the earth. We shall be very glad to find him;

and you must take care of our kingdom during our absence.

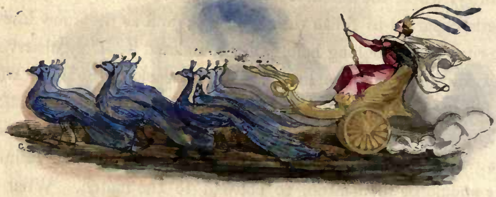
Rosetta thanked them for the pains they were taking; told them that she would govern the kingdom well, and that while they were gone her only pleasures would be looking at the beautiful peacock, and seeing Fretillon dance. They could not help crying when they bade one another adieu.

Behold the two young princes on their journey; asking every one they meet: "Pray, do you know the King of the Peacocks?"—They were always answered: "No, gentlemen, no!" They still kept going forward, till at last they got so far, that no one had ever been so far before.

They presently arrived at the kingdom of the May-flies, (there is no longer such a place to be seen): the may-flies made such a loud humming, that the king was afraid he should lose his hearing. He asked the one who appeared to him to be the most intelligent looking among them, whether he knew where the King of the Peacocks was to be found. "Sire," said the may-fly, "his kingdom is 90,000 miles from here; you have taken the longest road to reach it."—"How do you know that?" said the king.—"Because," said the may-fly, "we go every year to pass two or three months in their gardens." Then the king and his brother embraced the may-fly again and again; they became very friendly, and dined together; the princes examined with admiration all the curiosities of their country, where the smallest leaf was worth a dollar. They afterwards departed to finish their journey; and as they now knew the road, were not long before they completed it. They observed that all the trees were loaded with peacocks; the place was so full of them, that their voices might be heard six miles off.

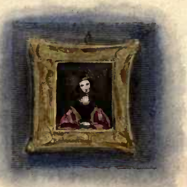
The king said to his brother: "If the King of the Peacocks is a peacock himself, how will our sister be able to marry him? We should be foolish too, to consent to the match. What a splendid alliance would she form for us: little peacocks for nephews and nieces!" The prince was equally grieved. "It is an unfortunate fancy that occupies her mind," said he; "I cannot think where she learned that there was a King of the Peacocks."

When they arrived at the chief town, they observed that it was full of men and women, whose clothes were made of peacocks' feathers; and that peacocks' feathers were displayed every where as very fine things. They met the king, *who was taking an airing in a beautiful little carriage made of gold and set with diamonds, drawn by twelve peacocks which were harnessed to it.* The King of the Peacocks was so very handsome, that our king and the prince were charmed with him; he was fair complexioned; had long light coloured curling hair, and a crown of large peacocks' feathers. When he came up he conjectured that the two princes, as they were dressed differently from the people of



the country, were foreigners; and in order to ascertain, he stopped his carriage and called to them.

The king and the prince went up to him; and, having made an obeisance, said:—"Sire, we have come from afar to show you a portrait." They then took from their portmanteau the large picture of Rosetta. When the King of the Peacocks had looked at it: "I cannot imagine" said he, that there is in the world so beautiful a girl."—"The original is a hundred times more beautiful than the picture," said the king.—"Ah! you are joking," said the King of the Peacocks.—"Sire," said the prince, "here is my brother who is a king like you: he is a king and I am a prince; our sister, *whose portrait this is*, is the princess Rosetta: and we are come to ask you whether you are willing to marry her; she is beautiful and very good, and we will give with her a bushel measure full of golden crowns."—"Yes indeed," said the king, "I will marry her with all my heart; she will want nothing with me, and I will be very fond of her; but I assure



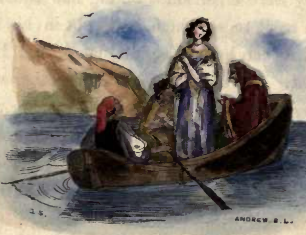
you that I expect her to be as fair as her portrait, and if she be in the smallest degree less so, I will put you to death."—"Well, we consent," answered Rosetta's two brothers.—"You consent?" said the king. "Go then to prison, and remain there until the princess arrives." The princes left him without a murmur, for they were quite certain that Rosetta was more handsome than her portrait.

When they were in prison the king had them well attended to; he often went to see them, and kept in his room Rosetta's portrait, with which he was so infatuated, that he slept neither day nor night. As the king and his brother were in prison, they wrote by post to the princess, desiring her to make herself ready and come with all speed to them, for at last the King of the Peacocks was found, and was awaiting her arrival. They did not inform her that they were prisoners, for fear of making her uneasy.

When the princess received the letter, she was so transported with joy as to be quite overcome; she told every body that the

King of the Peacocks was found and wished to marry her. Bonfires were lighted, cannons were discharged, and sugar-plums and sweetmeats were universally eaten; and all who came to see the princess during three days, were presented with a service of cake and wine. After this liberality, she left her fine dolls to her best friends; and placed the government of her brother's kingdom in the hands of the wisest old men of the capital. She recommended them to take care of all, to spend nothing, and to collect money against the king's return; she begged them to keep her peacock, and took with her only her nurse and her foster-sister, with her little green dog, Fretillon.

They all embarked in a boat on the sea, taking with them the bushel of golden crowns, and a sufficient quantity of clothes to last them ten years, changing them twice a day: they did



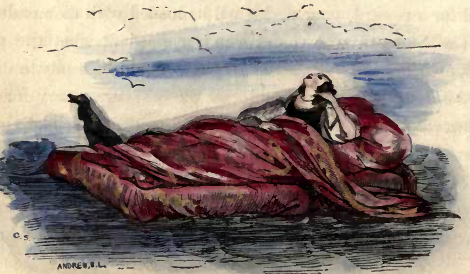
nothing but laugh and sing. The nurse at last asked the boatman: "Are we nearing, are we nearing the kingdom of the Peacocks?"—"Not yet," said he. Once more she asked him: "Are we nearing, are we nearing?" He said. "Presently, presently." Yet again she asked him: "Are we nearing, are we nearing?" This time he answered: "Yes!" And when he had said so, the nurse came forward and seated herself by him, and said to him: "If you wish it, you shall be rich for ever." He answered: "I desire nothing better." She then continued: "If you wish it then, you shall gain lots of dollars." He answered: "I desire nothing better."—"Very well," said she, "to-night, while the princess is asleep, you must assist me to throw her overboard. When she is drowned I will dress my daughter in her fine clothes, and we will take her to the King of the Peacocks, who will be very glad to marry her; and for a reward, your neck shall be loaded with diamonds."

The boatman was very much surprised at what the nurse proposed to him. He told her that it would be a pity to drown so beautiful a princess, and that he was very sorry for her. However, she took a bottle of wine, and made him drink so much, that he did not know how to refuse her.

Night being come, the princess went to bed as usual; her little Fretillon lay prettily at her feet, without moving a paw. Rosetta was sleeping very soundly, when the wicked nurse, who was watchful enough, left her to fetch the boatman. She brought him where the princess was sleeping; and then, without awakening her, they took her with her feather-bed, mattrass, sheets and counterpane; while the foster-sister also helped them all she could. They then threw her, bed and all, into the sea; and the princess was sleeping so soundly that she did not awaken.

But most fortunately her couch was made of phœnix-feathers, which are very scarce, and have this property, that they cannot sink; which caused her to float in her bed, as though she had been in a boat. The water however, gradually wetted her feather-bed, then the mattrass; and Rosetta, feeling the water, could not tell what it meant.

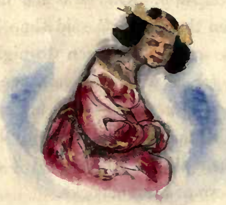
As she turned, *she awakened Fretillon*. He had an excellent



nose and smelt the cod and soles so near, that he began barking at them, which awakened all the other fish. They began swimming about; and the large fishes ran their heads against the princess's bed, which, being held by nothing, turned round and round like a whip-top. Oh! was she not surprised! "Is our boat dancing on the water?" said she. "I am not generally so ill at ease as I have been to-night." As Fretillon still kept barking, for he was in despair, the wicked nurse and the boatman heard it from a distance, and said: "That is the princess's comical little dog, drinking with his mistress to our good health; let us make haste to arrive:" for they were now close to the kingdom of the Peacocks.

The king had sent to the sea-shore a hundred carriages, drawn by all manner of scarce animals; there were lions, bears, stags, wolves, horses, oxen, asses, eagles and peacocks; and the carriage intended for the princess Rosetta, was drawn by six blue apes, who could leap and dance on the tight rope, and play a thousand pretty tricks; their harness was very superb, and was made of crimson velvet, with plates of gold. There were also sixty young ladies whom the king had chosen to wait on her; their clothes were of various colours, and gold and silver were the least valuable of their ornaments.

The nurse had been at great trouble to decorate her daughter; she had dressed her in Rosetta's finest gown, with a diamond head-dress and lots of jewels. But in spite of her pains, her daughter was as ugly as a monkey: her hair was black and greasy; she squinted shockingly; her limbs were crooked; she had *a large hump between her shoulders;* was bad-tempered, slovenly, and always grumbling.



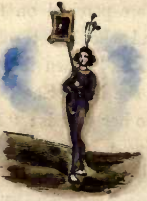
When the King of the Peacocks' people saw her coming out of the boat, they were so surprised that they could not speak. "Hey-day, what is the matter?" said she. "Are you all asleep? make haste and bring me something to eat; you are low wretches, and I will have you all hanged." On hearing this, they said among themselves: "What an ugly creature! and she appears to be as wicked as she is ugly. Truly our king will be well married; but I am not surprised when one seeks a wife from the end of the world." She gave as much trouble as she could; and for no offence, she struck and boxed the ears of everybody about her.

As her equipage was very large, she went along very slowly, and carried her head as high as a queen, in her coach. But all the peacocks, who were perched on the trees to salute her as she passed along, and who had resolved to cry: "Long live beautiful queen Rosetta," when they saw her so ugly, cried: "Fie, fie, how ugly she is." She flew into a violent passion upon this, and said to her guards: "Kill these rascals of peacocks, who are abusing me." The peacocks, however, quickly flew away, and laughed at her.

The roguish boatman, who saw all that passed, said to the nurse: "Gossip, we are not quite right; your daughter ought to be prettier." She answered: "Silence, blockhead; you will bring some ill-luck on us, with your prattle."

They told the king that the princess was drawing near. "Very well," said he, "did her brothers tell the truth? is she more beautiful than her portrait?"—"Sire," said a courtier, "it is enough if she is as good-looking."—"Yes, indeed," said the king, "I shall be satisfied; let us go and see her;" for he guessed by the noise in the court-yard, that she was now very near, though he could not make out exactly what was said, excepting that he thought he heard: "Fie, fie, how ugly she is." He thought, however, that these cries were applied to some dwarf or beast that she had brought with her; for it never entered his mind that they were speaking of the princess herself.

The portrait of Rosetta was carried *at the end of a long pole,*



without any covering; and the king walked slowly after it, with all his barons, his peacocks, and the ambassadors from the neighbouring kingdoms. The King of the Peacocks was very impatient to see his dear Rosetta, but in truth, when he did see her, the sight nearly killed him on the spot; he tore his clothes, put himself into the most violent passion, and would not go near her: she quite frightened him.

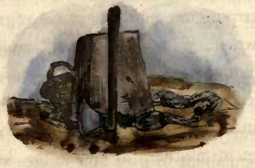
"What," said he, "have these two scoundrels that I have in prison, had the boldness to make sport of me, and to propose to marry me to such a baboon as that! They shall die. Come! away with this silly woman, her nurse and all who brought them; let them be confined in the round-tower."

Meanwhile, the king and his brother, who were prisoners, and knew that it was about the time for their sister to arrive, had put on their finest clothes to receive her. Instead, however, of seeing their prison door opened and themselves set at liberty, as they expected, the jailor came with soldiers, and made them descend into a dark dungeon, full of *noxious reptiles*, where they

were up to their necks in water. No one could be more surprised or sorrowful than they were. "Alas!" said they to each other, "this is a sorrowful wedding for us! what can have been the cause of such a sad misfortune?" They did not know what to think, excepting that they were doomed to death.

They passed three days in this miserable plight. At the end of that time, the King of the Peacocks came to an opening that was in the wall, to abuse them. "You have called yourselves king and prince," said he, "to entrap me into a marriage with your sister; but you are wretches who are not worth the water you drink. I am about to give you judges who will soon decide your fate; and the rope is twisting with which I will have you hanged." "King of the Peacocks," said our king, filled with indignation, "do not proceed so rashly in this affair, for you may yet repent it. I am, like you, a king, and have a fine kingdom, robes and crowns, and plenty of money; you seem to think very lightly of hanging us; have we stolen any thing?"

When the king heard him speak so resolutely, he knew not what to make of it, and had some thoughts of sparing their lives, and of letting them go with their sister; but his trusty friend, who was a real parasite, encouraged him; saying that if he did not revenge himself, all the world would laugh at him, and think him a weak prince indeed. So he swore that he would not forgive them, and ordered their trial to proceed. It did not last long, as to condemn them it was merely necessary to compare the portrait of the real princess Rosetta, with the person assuming the name. They were therefore sentenced *to be beheaded,* for having told the king a lie, in promising to him



in marriage a beautiful princess, and only giving him an ugly country girl.

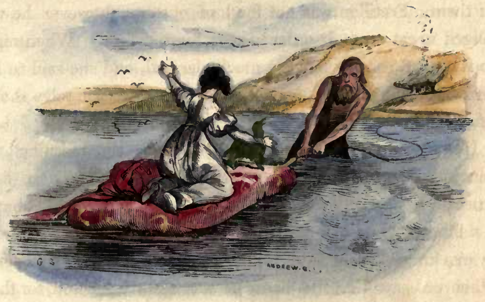
This decree was read very formally to them in prison, when they protested that they had not told a lie, for that their sister was a princess, more beautiful than the day; but that there was something passing which they could not comprehend. They demanded a respite of seven days, stating that in that time something might occur by which their innocence would be established. The King of the Peacocks, who was very angry, would hardly grant them this favour; but at last he did so.

While all this was passing at the court, we must relate what happened to the poor princess Rosetta. We have stated that when it was daylight, she was very much surprised, as was Fretillon also, to find herself out at sea without a boat or any assistance. She cried so pitifully that all the fishes were sorry for her: she knew not what to do or what would become of her. "Certainly," said she "the King of the Peacocks has ordered me to be thrown into the sea; he has repented his design of marrying me, and to get rid of me decently, he would have me drowned. What a silly man!" continued she, "I should have loved him so well! we should have managed so nicely." Then she cried still more, for she could not help loving him.

She remained two days floating in this manner, from one part of the sea to another, drenched to her skin, ready to die with cold, and nearly frozen; indeed, had it not been for little Fretillon, who kept up a little warmth near her heart, she would have died a hundred times. She was dreadfully hungry. She saw oysters in their shells, and took as many as she liked and ate them: Fretillon was not fond of oysters; however he was obliged to eat some, in order to keep himself alive. When night came on, Rosetta was very much alarmed, and she said to her dog: "Fretillon! pray keep barking, for fear the soles should eat us up."

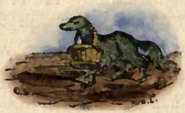
He barked all night long, and towards the morning the princess's bed was not very far from the shore. There happened to be thereabouts a good old man, who lived by himself in a little cottage, into which no one but himself ever entered: he was very poor, but very careless of the things of this world. When he heard Fretillon bark, he was quite surprised, for there were no dogs about there; it struck him therefore that some travellers had lost their way, and he went out kindly to direct them aright. Suddenly he perceived the princess and Fretillon, who were floating on the sea; the princess seeing him, stretched her arms towards him, and cried: "Good old man, save me, or I shall perish here, where I have been two days languishing."

When he heard her speak so sadly, his heart filled with pity for her misfortunes. He immediately fetched from his house a long boat-hook, with which he walked into the water till it was up to his neck, and was once or twice nearly drowned: *at last he succeeded in dragging the bed to the land.*



Rosetta and Fretillon were, as may be supposed, very glad to be once more on dry ground; the princess was very thankful to the good old man, and graciously accepted a blanket, which she wrapped around her: then, barefooted, she entered his cottage where he lighted a little fire of dry straw, and took out of his chest a woman's gown, with shoes and stockings, in which Rosetta dressed herself; and clad even thus, as a poor peasant girl, she was as beautiful as the day. Fretillon, enraptured, danced round her for her amusement.

The old man saw very plainly that Rosetta was some grand lady; for her bed clothes were embroidered with gold and silver, and her mattrass was covered with satin. He begged her to tell him her story, promising that he would not reveal a word of it, without her permission. She told him all from beginning to end, crying bitterly the while; for she still thought that the King of the Peacocks had ordered her to be drowned. "How shall we act, my child?" said the old man to her. "You are a noble princess, used to good living, while I have only black bread and radishes; you will fare but poorly with me, and if you will take my advice, will permit me to go and tell the King of the Peacocks that you are here; for were he to see you, he would certainly be but too happy to marry you."—"Ah! he is a wicked man," said Rosetta, "and would put me to death; but if you have a little basket, do but tie it round my dog's neck, and it will be very unfortunate, if he do not bring us back something to eat."



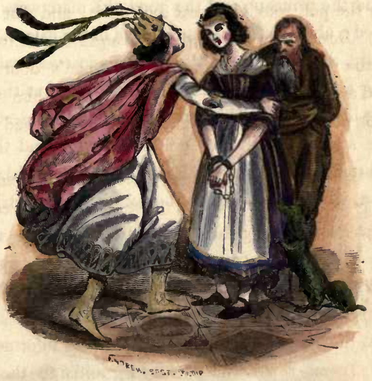
The old man gave the princess a basket; she tied it to Fretillon's neck, and said to him: "Go to the best saucepan in the city, and bring back whatever is therein." *Fretillon ran to the city;* and as the king's kitchen was the best, he went into it, sought out the best saucepan, cleverly took out the contents, and returned to his mistress. Rosetta then said to him: "Return to the pantry and fetch me the best thing thence." Fretillon went to the king's pantry, and soon returned with some white bread, muscadine wine, fruits and sweetmeats: he was so laden that he could not carry more.

When it was the King of the Peacocks' dinner-time, there was nothing in his saucepan, nor in his pantry; the servants looked at one another and the king went into a violent passion. "What," said he, "so I am to have no dinner; let the spit be put to the fire, and let me have some nice roast meat this evening." The evening being come, the princess said to Fretillon: "Go to the best kitchen in the city and fetch me a nice piece of roast meat." Fretillon did as he was told; and thinking that the king's was the best kitchen, he very softly entered it, while the cooks' backs were turned, and managed slily to take away all that was on the spit; it looked so delicious, that the very sight of it would have given an appetite to a sick man. He returned with his basket full to the princess, who then sent him back again to the pantry, whence he brought all the king's stewed fruit and sugar-plums.

The king, having had no dinner, was very hungry in the evening and wanted his supper early; but as there was nothing for him, he put himself into a terrible rage, and went to bed supperless. The next day at dinner and supper-time it was just the same; so that the king was three whole days without eating or drinking any thing, because whenever he sat down to eat, his victuals had all been taken away. His confidant, who was afraid that the king would die, hid himself in a corner of the kitchen, keeping his eyes fixed on the saucepan, which was on the fire, boiling. He was soon extremely surprised to see enter the kitchen, a little green dog, having only one ear, who went to the pot, took the meat out of it, and put it into his basket. Desirous to know where he went to, he followed him out of the town, right up to the old man's door. He then returned and revealed all to the king, telling him that it was to a poor peasant that his dinner and supper had gone every day.

The king was very much astonished, and ordered the dog to be sent for. The confidant, in order to make his court to the king, was very willing to show the archers the way. They went accordingly, and found the old man and the princess dining on the king's boiled meat. They were taken, and bound with large ropes, and Fretillon the same.

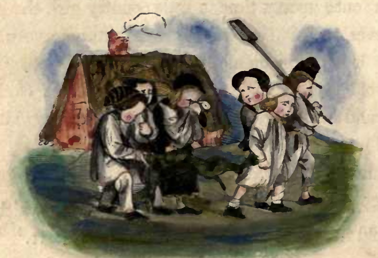
When they had arrived, and the king was informed of it, he said: "To-morrow is the last day I granted to those insulting pretenders, and they shall die with the thieves who have stolen my dinner;" he then went into his justice-hall. The old man threw himself on his knees, and said that he would tell him the whole truth. While he was speaking, the king looked at the, beautiful princess, and was moved at seeing her tears. But, when the good old man declared that she was the princess Rosetta, and had been thrown into the sea, in spite of his weakness from having been so long without food, *the king*



rushed to embrace her, and untying the ropes with which she was bound, told her that he loved her with all his heart.

The princes, who were immediately sent for, thought that they were about to be put to death, and came very sorrowfully, hanging down their heads; at the same time the nurse and her daughter were sent for. When they met, they all recognized each other; Rosetta threw herself into her brothers' arms; the nurse, her daughter and the boatman, knelt and asked for pardon. The joy was so great that they were forgiven by the king and the princess, and the good old man was handsomely rewarded: always afterwards residing in the palace.

Finally, the King of the Peacocks made every satisfaction to our king and his brother, testifying his grief that they had been so long ill-treated. The nurse restored to Rosetta her fine clothes and the bushel of golden crowns, and the wedding feast lasted a fortnight. Every body rejoiced, even little Fretillon, who ate nothing on the occasion, but partridge-wings.

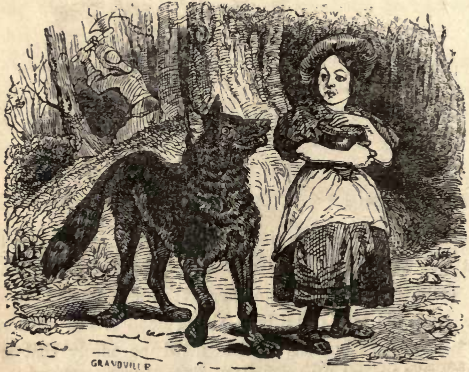


LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD.

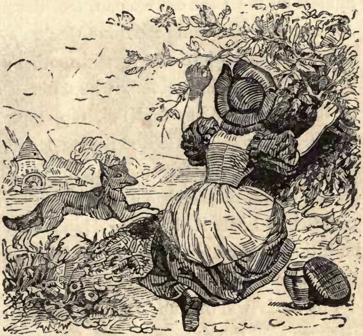
THERE was once upon a time, a little country girl, the prettiest that was ever seen. Her mother was naturally very fond of the child, but her grandmother absolutely doated on her. The good old lady had a little riding-hood of red cloth made for her grand-daughter, which fitted so nicely that every body called her "Little Red Riding-Hood."

One day her mother having baked some cakes, said to her: "Go and see your grand-mother; I am told that she is not very well; and take with you a cake and this little pot of butter."

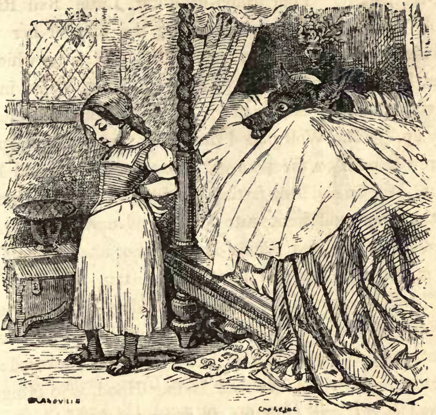
Little Red Riding-Hood immediately set out for her grandmother's cottage which was situated in a neighbouring village. As she was passing through a wood which was in her way, she met Master Wolf, who had a great desire to eat her; but dared not, for fear of some wood-cutters who were in the forest. *He asked her where she was going.* The poor child, who did not know that it was very dangerous to stay and listen to a wolf, answered him: " I am going to see my grand-mother, to take her a cake and a little pot of butter from my mother."—" Does she



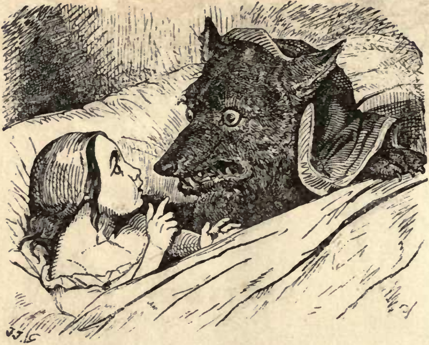
live very far from hence?" said Master Wolf. "O yes," answered Little Red Riding-Hood; "on the other side of the mill you see yonder; it is the first house in the village."—"Very well," said the Wolf, "I wish to see her also; so I will take this path, and do you take that, and we will see which of us shall be there first." With that, *the Wolf set off as fast as he could run,* by the shortest way, and the little girl went by the longest. As she went along, she amused herself with *gathering nuts, chasing butterflies, and making nosegays* of the little flowers that she met with. The Wolf was not long on his way to the grand-mother's house; he knocked, tap, tap, at the door. "Who is there?" said the



grand-mother. "Your grand-daughter, Little Red Riding-Hood," said the Wolf, counterfeiting the tone of her voice, "who has brought you a cake and a little pot of butter which her mother has sent you." The good old lady, who was in bed, being rather unwell, called out: "Pull the string, and the latch will fly up." The Wolf pulled the string, and the door opened. He threw himself on the poor old woman, and devoured her in a minute, for he had been fasting for three whole days: he then shut the door and went into the grand-mother's bed, and awaited for Little Red Riding-Hood, who, after a short time, came up to the door and knocked tap, tap, tap. "Who is there?" said Master Wolf. Little Red Riding-Hood, on hearing the Wolf's hoarse voice, was frightened at first; but thinking that perhaps her grand-mother had a cold, she answered: "It is I, your grand-child Little Red Riding-Hood, who brings you a cake and a little pot of butter which my mother has sent you." The Wolf then called out, in a milder tone of voice: "Pull the string, and the latch will fly up." Little Red Riding-Hood pulled the string, and the door opened. When the Wolf saw her enter the cottage, he concealed his head under the bed clothes, and said: "Put the cake and the little pot of butter on the bench, and come to bed to me." *Little Red Riding-Hood then undressed herself,* and stepped into bed; but was very much surprised at the strange appearance of her grand-mother in her



bed-gown. She said to her therefore: "Grand-mother, what large arms you have!"—"They are so much the better to embrace you with, my child."—"Grand-mother, what long legs you have!"—"They are so much the better to run with, my child."—"Grand-mother, what long ears you have!"—"They are the better adapted for hearing, my child."—"Grand-mother what large eyes you have!"—"They are so much the



better to see with, my child."—"*But Grand-mother what large teeth you have!*"—"*They are so much the better to eat you up with,*" and saying these words the wicked Wolf sprang upon Little Red Riding-Hood, and swallowed her in an instant.

SEPTIMUS.

There was once upon a time a king and queen, who had a very small kingdom to govern. The king was named Petard; he was a very good man, rather blunt, of a weak and limited mind; but otherwise the best king in the world. His subjects were nearly as much masters in his kingdom as himself, for on the most unimportant occasions they gave their advice rather loudly and without its being asked for; and each of them wished his notions on government to be noticed and followed.

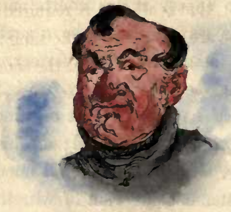
The queen was called Gilletta; she had no larger share of talents than her husband, but still her character was mild, timid and inoffensive, which caused her to speak little, and often by sentences only; she paid that submissive deference to the king, which a wife usually pays to the husband to whom she owes her fortune.

As Petard was the only child of the king and queen, his father and mother, they resolved, from his birth, to marry him to a little princess, the niece of an old fairy, named Gangan, who was at that time the intimate friend of Petard's father and mother. It is true that the princess was not yet come into the world; but, on Gangan's assuring them that she should one day be an accomplished person, all that she required was promised, and an oath was even taken to ensure it.

Petard having arrived at twenty-five years of age, thought it would be proper to marry to his own mind; he troubled himself but little about his father and mother's promises, and married, without their consent, an extremely pretty young lady, of whom he was very fond. She was only a rich farmer's daughter; but although she was married to a king's son, her natural good sense prevented her becoming vain, that is to say, silly.

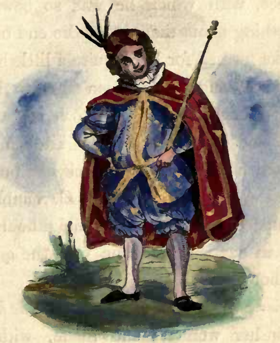
The king, Petard's father, angry at that prince's marriage, could not refuse to Gangan the right of avenging the affront which he had put on them both; he accordingly disinherited his son, forbade him ever to appear at his court, and gave him his portion, which it was settled should be a pretty considerable estate, on which his father in law was farmer. All the favour that was granted him was, leave to erect this little estate into a sovereignty, himself having the title of king and majesty. Shortly after his disgrace, his father died; and his mother having obtained the regency, was not sorry to be unencumbered with a son, who, notwithstanding his want of wit, might have been able to thwart her projects, and to oppose her desire of reigning.

Petard was neither ambitious nor a conqueror; consequently he was not long in accustoming himself to his small estate, and even in becoming very well pleased with it: small as it was, he reigned therein, as though it were larger; in fact it was quite as large as was necessary for him; and the titles of king and majesty served him instead of a large kingdom. But as the most bounded minds have always at least their share of vanity, he soon prided himself in imitating the king his father, and created a seneschal, a solicitor-general, and a chamberlain (for in these days, chancellors, parliaments, and farmers-general were alike unknown; the kings administered justice themselves, and received in person their revenues). He also coined money, instituted, with his seneschal, regulations for the police of his little kingdom; *his father in law Carbuncle* being the person



whom he honored with the title of seneschal. He was a frank, sincere, and upright man, and was endowed by nature with good common sense and some imagination: accordingly he decided slowly, but nearly always justly: he knew by heart the verses of the poets of his time, and was fond of reciting them. This little appointment did not make him vain; for he continued to make the farm as valuable as before; which so gained him his son-in-law's confidence, that his majesty soon was unable to do without him.

Carbuncle visited the king every morning, and took his breakfast with him: they talked on business, but the minister would very often say to the king: "Sire, with your permission, you do not understand it; allow me to manage and all will go well; 'let every body mind his own affairs,' says the poet."—"But," replied the king. "what shall I do then?"—"Whatever you like," answered Carbuncle; "you can govern your wife, and your kitchen-garden; that is all that is required of you."—"In truth, I think that you are right," said the king; "so do as you think fit." However, to lose nothing on the score of reputation, *he always displayed himself on feast-days, in a royal cloak of red cloth* printed with flowers of gold, a cap of the same material, with a gilded wooden sceptre, which he had bought of an old strolling player, who had retired from the stage. In accordance with the advice of his seneschal, he obtained Francis Moore and Partridge's almanacks, which were forwarded to him from

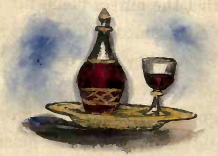


Station ers' Hall every year in the month of July, and which he had regularly bound in fine marble paper with the edges gilt. In the one he learned the proper sowing time; also the season for planting, cutting, grafting, draining and clearing; and he trusted in it so implicitly that he often physicked himself and his queen when they did not want it. In the other, he studied political prophecies, with which he was so bewildered, that he understood nothing about them. At the end of a few years, all these almanacks formed for him, quite a little library, of which he was as fond as though it had been equal to the Bodleian, and he and the seneschal alone had keys to it. In the afternoon, he employed himself in his royal little kitchen garden, and in putting in practice what his almanack had taught him in the morning. In the evening he sent for Carbuncle with whom he played until supper time, at beat my neighbour out of doors or piquet; he then supped in public with the queen, and at ten o'clock every body was in bed.

Gilletta on her part, employed herself with the household affairs; she spun with her women; and made, with her cows' and goats' milk, excellent cheese; but, above all, every morning, she never failed to knead a little cake of barley-flour, which she baked on the hearth and carried, with a cream cheese, to her little garden, where she placed it at the foot of a rose tree; as she had been directed in a dream to do the day after her wedding.

The tranquillity which they both enjoyed in their little kingdom was only disturbed by the wish of having children. They had been married two years, and Petard had begun to despair, when one day, as he was in his fruit garden with his seneschal, the midwife of his kingdom, who was also first lady of honour to the queen, came and announced to him that he was likely to become a father.

Transported with joy at this intelligence, he embraced the midwife with all his heart, and taking from his finger a fine ring formed of a cat's eye, he presented it to her. He did not stop there, for he gave that evening a grand supper to all the chief men of his kingdom; after which he fired off himself all his artillery, which consisted of twelve arquebusses with locks, and six carbines with rods. It is said that at supper, his immediate joy made him say things incompatible with his dignity; and that when his seneschal remonstrated with him upon the subject, he replied by throwing *a large glass of wine* in that minister's face; saying: "Many thanks, father-in-law, you are, perhaps, right, but one is not a father every day: however, let us say no more about it, and let us rejoice, for, in my place, you would, perhaps, act quite as wisely." Carbuncle made no reply, and every body withdrew from their majesties, very well pleased.

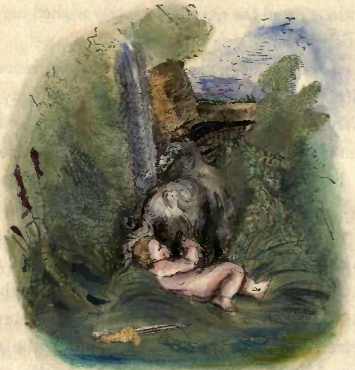


As the king was loved by his subjects, rejoicings were duly made, the same day and hour, all over the kingdom to celebrate this event.

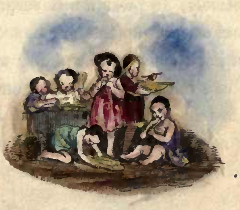
"Every thing comes in time to him who can wait," said the queen quietly. And thus, instead of one child, at one birth she brought Petard seven; three boys, three girls, and then another boy. The last child had the most beautiful eyes that were ever seen; a white skin, and eyebrows, like his hair, black as jet; as he was born with curly hair, the king and queen liked him better than the others; and the queen absolutely wished herself to nurse her little Septimus, which was his name.

At the end of eighteen months the three princes became so lively and playful, that the nurses could not do any thing with them. When they complained to the king, he answered them: "Let them alone; when they shall be as old as I am, they will not be so lively: I was the same, I who am now speaking to you:—and all in good time." The three princesses, on the contrary, were gentle; but so dull, so quiet, that they would remain in any places they were put; which caused the king to like his sons best, and the queen to prefer her daughters, except in regard to Septimus, who had none of his brothers' and sisters' defects and was the prettiest child in the world. He would soon have been spoiled, if a kind fairy, unknown to Gangan and even to Gilletta, had not endowed him with an equable and unchangeable character.

When it was necessary to wean the children of their majesties, a cabinet council was called, composed of the seneschal, the solicitor general, the chamberlain and the nurses, who were also summoned. After a long discussion, it was resolved, by the advice of Carbuncle, to use cows' milk for the three boys, and *goats' milk* for the three girls: this appeared to be a very good and simple means of correcting the vivacity of the princes,

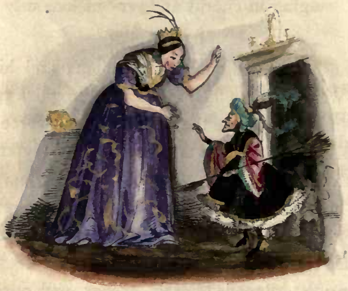


and the dulness of the princesses; but, when they were older, and it became necessary to give them more substantial food, *they consumed such an enormous quantity*, that the king's revenues were considerably diminished thereby; besides, as the princes had only lost part of their vivacity by their early nourishment, and the princesses had acquired an additional quantity, there was an uproar and frightful quarrelling all day long. They fought and pulled each other about, and wore out so many, many clothes, that there could hardly be enough found for them. The



little Septimus alone was mild and obedient; and his brothers and sisters were always playing him some roguish trick. The king would frequently say to the queen: "Your three daughters grow excessively tall, and by my sceptre, I hardly know what I shall do with them; as for my boys I will give them the care of my farm; but for your daughters, it is different." To which the queen would answer: "Sire, let us have patience; for *every thing comes in time to him who can wait.*"

While king Petard made himself uneasy, and queen Gilletta kept herself quiet, their children attained seven years of age. Every one of those who composed their court, had already given his advice or rather his decision as to the establishment of the princesses and princes, when one morning the queen who had just kneaded her little cake, perceived on the table a pretty little blue mouse nibbling the dough: her first impulse was to drive it away, but an involuntary feeling withheld her; she watched it attentively, and was much surprised to see it seize the little cake and carry it up the chimney. Her quietness now gave way to her impatience, and running after the mouse with the intention of taking its booty from it, she saw both disappear, and beheld in their place *a little shrivelled old woman a foot high at most.* After making several grimaces, and uttering some half intelligible words, this little hop o' my thumb put the shovel and tongs across, described over them with the broom, three circles and three triangles, uttered seven short sharp cries, and finished by throwing the broom over her head. The queen, notwithstanding her fear, did not fail to remark that the old woman, while tracing the circles and triangles, had distinctly pronounced these three words, *confidence, discretion, happiness;* and was trying to discover their meaning, when a



voice which she heard in the next room, attracted her attention. As she thought it was Septimus's voice, she ran there immediately; but had hardly opened the door when she perceived three large may-flies, each of which held in its paws one of her daughters; and three tall young ladies who had on their backs her three sons. They all immediately passed through the window, singing in chorus and very melodiously:

" Fly away, fly of May
Fly away, fly away."

What moved Gilletta most was, to see in the midst of them, Septimus between the blue mouse's paws; they were both in a little car made of a large rose-coloured snail-shell, and drawn by two goldfinches, with beautifully streaked feathers. The mouse, who appeared to be larger than mice generally are, was dressed in a beautiful gown of Persian silk, and a mantle of black velvet, a hood tied under its chin, and had two little blue horns over its forehead. The car, the may-flies and the young ladies, went away so quickly, that the queen soon lost sight of them. Then, more concerned at the loss of Septimus and her children, than at the fairies and their power, she began to call out and to weep with all her might. The king hearing her grief, ran to the chamber, followed by his seneschal, and was anxious to know what had occured; but Gilletta's grief was so overwhelming that she could only answer him in these words: " The may-flies!

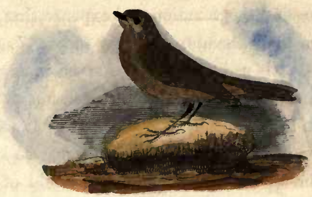
——the young ladies!——ah! Sire my children are torn from me!" The king who only paid attention to these last words, abruptly quitted Gilletta, and ordered Carbuncle to take two muskets from his ante-chamber, for he always had a half dozen by him in expectation that he should one day have as many guards. Then crossing his royal kitchen garden, he reached the country with the design of pursuing and killing the robbers.

About an hour after he was gone, the queen, who had exhausted her tears, and was sighing for the loss of her children, heard something humming round her, and saw fall at her feet a piece of paper folded square; she picked it up, opened it precipitately, and read as follows:

"Calm your uneasiness, my dear Gilletta, and remember that your happiness depends on confidence and discretion; you have begun well by your exactitude in giving me your cakes and cheeses, and my gratitude will do the rest; but always be convinced that 'every thing comes in time to him who can wait,' and that you may hope every thing from your friend,

"The Fairy of the Fields."

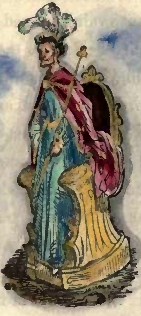
This note, together with her confidence in the power of the fairies, sufficed to calm her inquietude, and, addressing *a little linnet* which she perceived at the top of her bed: "Linnet,



pretty linnet," said she "I will do all that you wish, but tell me I beg of you, as soon as you hear of him, some news of my little Septimus." At these words the linnet fluttered its wings, sang a few notes, and flew away; and the queen, persuaded that this was as much as to say, "I consent," thanked it and made the bird a low curtsey. In the mean time the king and his seneschal, tired of their useless pursuit, had returned to the house, and finding the queen so very tranquil, the king was somewhat offended at her apparent indifference. He asked her several questions to ascertain the cause; to which Gilletta gave no other answer than: "Every thing comes in time to him who can wait." This coolness so vexed him that he would have gone into a passion, if his seneschal had not urged on him that Gilletta was right, and that the poet Pibrac had said so before her in one of his couplets, which he forthwith recited. The king, to whom Carbuncle was an oracle, was silent, and listened with attention to a nice little sermon which he then preached to him on the evil of having children, and the vexation and expense that they almost always entail on their parents. "By my sceptre," said the king, "my father-in-law is right; and those seven brats would have ruined me, had they remained with me much longer; therefore, many thanks to him or her who has taken them; as they came so are they gone: it is only so much lost time; so let us rejoice and begin again." The queen, who was afraid of saying too much, very prudently said nothing; and the king, having no more to say, returned to his closet and played a game at piquet with his seneschal.

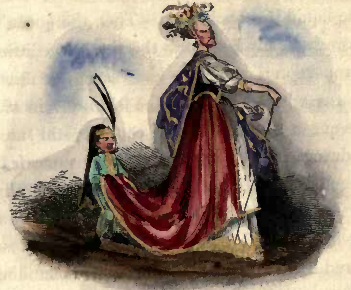
While all this was passing with king Petard, the queen, his mother, tiring of her widow-hood, which had now lasted an unusually long time, resolved to re-marry. With this intention she cast her eyes on a young prince of a neighbouring kingdom, sovereign of the Green Isles. He was handsome, well made, and his mind was as pleasing as his person; his pleasures were his only employments; nothing was to be heard of but his gallantries; and it was averred that every pretty woman in his kingdom was deeply in love with him.

His advantageous reputation, together with a portrait of the prince, so turned the head of the queen, that she flattered herself with the idea of making him love her and fixing his inconstancy. There was only one difficulty, which was, that she was neither young nor lovely; *she was tall and thin,* had small eyes, a long



and crooked nose, and a large mouth, not entirely without a beard on the upper lip. Such a figure might not be without its advantages to a queen, as it would command respect; but it was little calculated to inspire love. It is difficult to blind one's self to one's defects, when they reach a certain point; she felt, therefore, in moments of reflection, that, with her person, it would be impossible for her to please the young king of the Green Isles, and that to succeed in so doing, she must possess beauty, or, at least, youth; but how to come by it? how to change gray hairs and masculine features, for an amiable figure, infantine graces and an enticing mien? It is true that Gangan, her friend, might have been of great assistance to her in this affair, but as that fairy had several times vainly urged the queen to adopt her niece, and to proclaim her heiress to the crown, she had every thing to fear from exciting her choler by such a proposal. The old queen felt all this, hesitated, and struggled, but looked so frequently at the portrait of the handsome prince of the Green Isles, that love at last conquered her fear of the fairy, to whom she communicated her sentiments, conjuring her, in the most pressing terms to assist her with her art, and not to refuse her this essential proof of her friendship. She even went so far as to shew her the portrait of the young prince, begging her approval of her design. Gangan could not conceal her surprise, but she dissimulated her resentment; she foresaw the bad consequences of protesting openly against this marriage, since the king of the Green Isles, who had nearly ruined his estates in supporting his extravagance, might find it convenient to conclude the union from interested motives and might oppose her designs by the assistance of a powerful protecting genius of his kingdom: so pretending to give her hand to this affair, she promised the queen to set to work at making her young again; but she promised herself, at the same time, to deceive the queen, and to put the execution of her will out of her majesty's power.

On the day that the fairy had appointed for the fulfilment of her promises, she appeared dressed in a long flesh coloured and

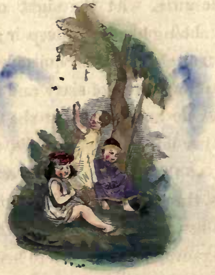


silver satin robe; her head dress was composed entirely of artificial flowers and tinsel trinkets; *a little dwarf held the end of her robe,* and carried under his left arm a black china box. The queen received her with the greatest marks of respect and gratitude, and begged her, after the usual compliments, not to delay her happiness. The fairy consented, made every body retire, and ordered her dwarf to shut the doors and windows; then having taken from her box a vellum book, ornamented with large silver clasps, a wand made of three metals, and a phial which contained a very clear but greenish liquid, she seated the queen on a cushion in the middle of the room, and desired the dwarf to place himself opposite her majesty; then having traced round them three spiral circles, she read in her book, touched the queen and the dwarf three times with her wand, and sprinkled them with the liquid just spoken of. Then the queen's features began to grow gradually less, and the size of the little dwarf to increase in proportion; so that in less than three minutes, they changed figures without feeling the slightest inconvenience. Although the queen was armed with courage, still she could not witness the dwarf's increasing size without some fear; which was so augmented by a bluish flame which rose all at once from the three circles, that she suddenly fainted away; when the fairy, having finished the enchantment, opened a window and disappeared with her page, who, notwithstanding his increased height, still held his mistress's robe and carried the china box.

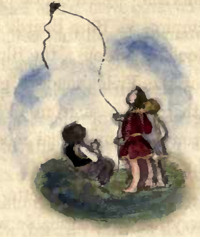
The first thing that the queen did, after she had regained her senses, was to consult her looking glass; she there saw, with the utmost pleasure, that her features were charming in the extreme; but did not remark that these same features were those of a little girl of eight or nine years old; that her dress hat had taken the shape of a girl's cap, furnished with ringlets of fair hair, and that her gown was changed to a frock with short sleeves and a lace apron; all this, added to her slender figure, which the charm had not in the least degree diminished, made her a very droll object, however, she observed it not, for, of all the ideas that she had possessed before the enchantment, those only remained which referred to the prince of the Green Isles, and to the love which she felt for him. She was, therefore, quite as contented with herself as her courtiers were astonished at her appearance; they knew not what to do even, or what part to take, when the prime-minister, on whom all the great depended, extricated them from their embarrassment, and decided that, so far from contradicting the queen, it was necessary to flatter her majesty's tastes and humours; and he began by ordering his wife and daughters to conform themselves to her will. Soon, to please the minister, the example was followed, and, in a short time, all the court dressed like the queen, and imitated her in all she did. Every one, even the men, spoke childishly; no one played at any game but puss in the corner, at forfeits, or birds beasts and fishes. The cooks had to dress nothing but custards, tartlets and little puffs. Nothing was done but dressing and undressing dolls, and at all the games and feasts, the only subject of conversation was the king of the Green Isles. The queen spoke of him a hundred times a day, and always called him her little husband. She asked for him continually, and was satisfied for some time, with each subterfuge which was used to flatter or deceive her; but at last gaiety gave way to caprice, and she felt all the humours of a child who has not obtained what it wants and whose nurse dares not oppose its will. After being amused for some time with so singular an event (for the indolence of a court causes it to amuse itself with any thing), people grew tired of the puerilities of this great child; and weary of the constraint, as well as of the complaisance which it was necessary to display; they forsook her court, and it was on the point of being quite abandoned, when it was positively stated in the Court Circular, that the king of the Green Isles, who was travelling over the neighbouring kingdoms, would soon arrive there. At this news their courage revived. The queen became so gay and cheerful, that she did nothing but sing and dance while awaiting the prince's arrival. The happy moment at length arrived; she ran to meet him; and although she was told that it was contrary to etiquette, she actually determined to receive him at the foot of her staircase!—but as she was hastily descending, she became entangled in her train, which had been recently lengthened in accordance with the fashion, and fell with considerable violence. Although her hands had saved her head, and her nose was only slightly grazed, she was so frightened that she uttered loud cries, and was carried to her chamber, when her face was bathed with Hungary water, and she was only quieted on being informed that her little husband was come to see her, and in truth the prince appeared, but the sight of so ridiculous a figure made him burst into such violent fits of laughter, that he was obliged to quit the room and even the palace. The queen, who witnessed his departure, began to cry, with all her might, that she wanted her little husband; he was followed and entreated to return; but ineffectually; for he would not consent, but made the best of his way from a court where every body appeared to him to be insane. The queen, as may be supposed, was inconsolable; in vain every means was tried to calm her, her ill humour only became the more insupportable in consequence, and the yoke appeared to press too heavily, on those even who liked her best. The majority, ashamed to be the subjects of such a queen, were of opinion that it would be the best to dethrone her, which was about to be done, when Gangan, who only wished to disgust her with marriage, disenchanted her and restored her original appearance. At the sight of her natural figure, she thought of stabbing herself in despair; she had found herself charming under that she had just quitted, and now saw, in its place, but a face of upwards of sixty and an ugliness which she detested. She never conceived that she had been in the least ridiculous under her late metamorphosis, and had certainly lost none of her love, so that the loss of her youth, and of the prince of the Green Isles, threw her into a languor which threatened her life, and inspired her at the same time with an implacable hatred for the fairy Gangan. With regard to her subjects, they began to pity her, and to look on these events as a just punishment for the sacrifice she had made of her maternal tenderness and gratitude, at the shrine of ambition and to her insensate desires.

It was about this time that the Fairy of the Fields had taken away the children of Petard and Gilletta. The generous fairy was the protectress of those who were obliged to live in the country; and occupied herself incessantly in preventing or diminishing the misfortunes to which they were destined. She was the better able to protect them, inasmuch as she possessed the friendship and favour of Titania, the Queen of the Fairies.

The Isle Bambine, which that queen had placed under her government, was the place to which she had transported the four boys and three girls of King Petard and Queen Gilletta. *This isle was inhabited by children only,* who, under the protection of the fairies, were well looked after, by nurses and their

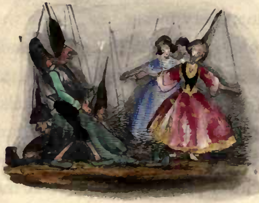


attendants. A perpetual Spring reigned there; the trees and meadows were always covered with fruits and flowers, and the ground produced spontaneously, all that could please the eye or gratify the palate. The walks were charming, the gardens varied and filled with pretty little carriages of all kinds, drawn by spaniels with long ears. But nicest and best of all—the walls of the children's rooms were made of sugar-candy, the floors of preserved citron, and the furniture of excellent gingerbread. When they were very good, the children might eat of these nice things as much as they pleased, without its diminishing or injuring them in the slightest degree, and besides this, in the streets and walks were to be seen all sorts of pretty little dolls, magnificently dressed, who walked and danced of themselves. The little girls, who were neither proud, nor greedy, nor disobedient, had only to form a wish, and immediately sweetmeats and fruits came of themselves to seek them; the dolls threw themselves into their arms, and allowed themselves to be dressed and undressed, caressed and whipped with unparallelled docility and discretion; but when, on the other hand, these little girls committed any fault, the dolls ran away from them, making faces at those who had called them; the sweetmeats changed into gall, and the dolls' dresses became dirty and slovenly. With regard to the little boys, when they were neither obstinate, story-telling nor idle, *they had little punchi-*

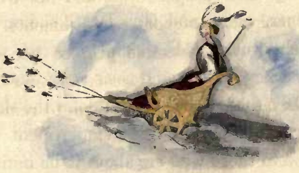


nellos, *kites*, rackets, and playthings for every sport that can be thought of; but when the nurses were discontented, the punchinellos laughed at the naughty boys, bouncing against their noses, and upbraiding them with the faults they had committed; the kites had no wind, the rackets were pierced; in a word nothing succeeded with them, and the more obstinate they were, the worse this was. There were punishments and rewards of some kind or other for all ages; as, for example, one finding himself on a donkey, who had expected to be mounted on a little horse nicely caparisoned, or another hearing it said of herself: "Ah! how ugly she is! how slovenly she is! how ever did she come here?" while the good young ladies were well dressed, caressed and rewarded; in a word, nothing was neglected to correct in the children, faults both of heart and head; and to instruct and amuse them, they were allowed to read the annals of fairyism, which contain the most remarkable histories of that empire, as Blue Beard, Prince Lutin, the Beneficent Frog, the Good little Mouse, the Blue Bird, and many others; for the Fairy of the Fields made a great matter of it, and collected them with great care from all the kingdoms of the world, and it is from her copy, that most of the tales in the "Child's Fairy Library," are printed.

While the children of Petard and Gilletta were residing in the isle of Bambine, every means imaginable was put in practice to overcome the obstinacy of the three boys and the pride of the three girls; but these faults, far from diminishing, only augmented with their years. For four years, the particular interest which the fairy governess herself took in these children, joined to the cares, the attention and patience of the nurses, had scarcely wrought the slightest perceptible change in their dispositions; when feeling but too strongly that their natural tendencies were too powerful for a simple education, the fairy no longer sought to overcome them by the usual means, but was obliged to have recourse to the violent remedy of a metamorphosis; and in truth, although this extreme measure appear somewhat hard, it was yet indispensable under the circumstances, with a view to the formation of their future characters. The children, notwithstanding their changes, preserved the ideas and sentiments of what they were, and of what they had been; still yielding to the laws of their new state. When the fairy, who had the power of penetrating their thoughts, believed them reclaimed, she restored to them their proper forms and her friendship; and even procured them advantageous establishments. She changed then, although with considerable pain to her own feelings, *the three sons of Petard into Punchinellos, and the three girls into Dancing Dolls,* and condemned them to remain as puppets



for the space of three years. As she was, however, as satisfied with prince Septimus as she had been displeased with his brothers and sisters, she did not wish him to be a witness of their disgrace, and resolved to remove him from them. The only difficulty was to find an asylum where he would be safe from the machinations of Gangan: so to neglect nothing on his account, she thought it would be well to consult with her friend, the Queen of the Fairies, and take her mature advice on what she was about to do. With this intention, she put on her green velvel farthingale, her jonquil-coloured satin mantle, and her little blue riding-hood: and *with nine white may-flies* attached to



her gilded wicker post-chaise, their harness being of rose-coloured ribbon, she set out with all diligence, and arrived in a short time at the Fortunate Island, where the Queen of the Fairies ordinarily resided.

Having alighted at the end of a magnificent avenue of orange and citron trees, she entered the court-yard of the castle, where she found, in a row, twenty-four black genii, six feet high, wearing long gowns with trains, and carrying on the left shoulder a polished steel club; they had behind them seventy-four black ostriches spotted with red and blue, which they held in leashes, keeping a profound silence. These black genii were wicked fairies, condemned to hold these posts as slaves for several ages, according to the nature of their crimes. When they perceived the fairy, they saluted her, grounding their clubs on the pavement; and as that was of steel also, it made a clashing sound, and emitted sparks of fire. This honour was rendered to all who, like the Fairy of the Fields had a government. Having ascended the staircase, which was made of porphyry, jasper, agate and lapis-lazuli, she saw in the first apartment twelve young ladies simply dressed, without hoods; they had only a key chain round their waist, and the half-wand, with which they saluted her as had done the slaves; the fairy returned their salutation, for their employment was such as is generally given to those who are about to be initiated in the art of fairyism. She passed through a long suite of apartments magnificently furnished, and at last reached the queen's antechamber, which she found full of fairies, who were met there from all parts of the world, some on business, others to pay their court to her majesty.

The queen's closet was nearly empty, when she saw the old fairy Gangan come from it. The respect which fairies and all good people ever pay to their sovereign, could scarcely prevent her from laughing at the sight of so grotesque a figure as that of Gangan. Over a skirt of green satin, bedizened with blue and gold lace, she wore a large farthingale of the same material, embroidered with rose-coloured caterpillars and trinkets; and a half girdle enriched with emeralds. Hanging to a silver chain, she had a small looking-glass and patch-box, a large watch, and a casket of rare coins; her ears were loaded with two large pearl and ruby drops, and she had on her head a light yellow velvet hood, with an *aigrette* of amethysts and topazes; a large bouquet of jasmin ornamented the front of her person, and ten or twelve patches scattered over a faded rouge, covered a wrinkled and dry-rose-leaf-coloured skin.

If the Fairy of the Fields was surprised at the ridiculous equipage of Gangan, the latter was not less so at meeting with her rival, at a moment when she least expected it. She was not ignorant of the protection afforded by the fairy to the children of Petard and Gilletta; but as the place they were then in, prevented her giving vent to her resentment, she concealed it as well as she could; and affecting an air of politeness mingled with dignity, said to her: "What, madam, have you resolved to leave the quiet of the country, to revel in the tumult of a court? you must have had weighty reasons to induce you to such a sacrifice."—"The reasons which bring you and myself here are certainly widely different,"—interrupted the Fairy of the Fields; "as neither interest nor ambition have ever been motives for the grant of my protection; and as I only yield it to the worthy and grateful."—"I believe so," replied Gangan, "turkies and geese are a very good sort of people."—"True," answered the Fairy of the Fields warmly, "much more so than Gangans, for they are not unjust;—what say you to that?"

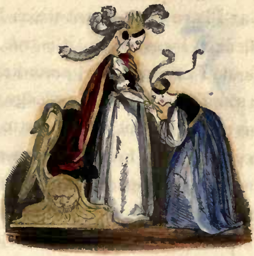
The dispute would not have ended here, if the Fairy of the Fields had not been warned that the queen was alone and wished to speak with her. So the two fairies saluted and parted, as women who perfectly hate each other always do.

Titania who perceived the emotion that this dispute had raised in her friend, feigned ignorance of its cause, but requested to be informed on the subject. The Fairy of the Fields, pleased to gratify her mistress's curiosity, did not hesitate in revealing the unjust motives of Gangan for persecuting king Petard and queen Gilletta, and informed her that pity had made her endeavour to thwart the perfidious designs of that fairy. "Your intentions are praiseworthy," said the queen to her, "and I am glad to see in you this generous zeal in protecting the unfortunate; but I am afraid, notwithstanding, that Gangan will still manage to avenge herself for the kindness you have shewn to the good Gilletta and her children. She is wicked, and I often receive complaints in respect to her; but be assured that if she again abuse her power to your injury, I will punish her in a terrible and exemplary manner; I can say no more: the council hour has arrived, but at my return we will confer together on the means of thwarting your enemy's wicked designs." The queen then left the apartment.

When the Fairy of the Fields was alone, she could not resist an inclination to consult her sovereign's books. All the mysteries of fairyism are therein revealed, and by them may be discovered, from day to day, what is passing all over the universe. The queen only, had the power of suspending or turning the course of events; holding over fairies the same dominion as the fairies hold over mankind. The protectress of our hero had no sooner opened *these books,* than she read in them distinctly,

that by the power of Grand Fairyism, the perfidious Gangan was at that moment carrying off the young prince Septimus, and was then transporting him to the inaccessible Island in which she had kept her own niece, since the hour of her birth. At this sight, she at first trembled for the life of her *protégé,* and then for his heart and his sentiments, for she knew that this wicked fairy was more capable of corrupting than of forming the mind. The uneasiness that this event caused her, gave way to reflection, and she was considering the means of preventing the consequences of this occurrence, when the queen came from council and rejoined her. From the sorrow which she perceived on her friend's countenance, Titania guessed what had taken place during her absence; and speaking to her said: "You have, I see, satisfied your curiosity: and have learned that which I would have kept from your knowledge. I was unable, it is true, to refuse Gangan the power of Grand Fairyism, since, according to our laws, it is due to her long standing; but the knowledge which I possess of her character has made me limit this power to a certain space of time; be assured, generous fairy, that when that period has elapsed, your enemy shall be severely punished, if she shall have abused the power which she holds only from our laws and my kindness. However, to give you to day a proof of my friendship for you, and to place Gilletta's other children, in whom you are interested, out of Gangan's reach, take this phial, and rub them with the liquid it contains. It is Invisible-water; and conceals objects from the sight of fairies alone; its charm is such that Gangan, with all her power cannot overcome it. Go, my dear friend, remember always that your queen loves generosity, protects virtue: and ever rely on her protection and tenderness." *At these words the fairy respectfully took the queen's hand, kissed it, and departed.*

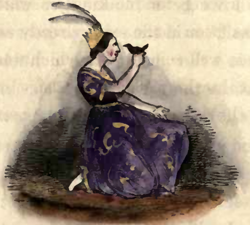
No sooner was she in her island than she made use of the Invisible-water. With it she rubbed the three punchinellos and the three dancing-dolls, with the exception of the tips of their noses, which she left visible in order to recognize them herself; then, having given her orders and consulted her books, she set



out for Petard's kingdom, where she learned that her presence was necessary.

In truth, when she arrived there, Petard's little state was in sad disorder, and the cause was this. It was now a long time past, since the house in which his majesty had resided, and in which his father-in-law, the seneschal, had lived before him, had fallen in on all sides, in spite of the repairs which it had undergone. Petard had resolved, in a consultation with a master mason, whom he had made his chief architect, to rebuild another. This crown-officer, not having for some time done any thing for their majesties, had completely rased the old building, with the design of commencing a new one, which, according to his account, was to be much more magnificent. The king's savings, since the abduction of his children, and his annual revenues, not however being sufficient for the erection of this new edifice, he resolved, at the recommendation of his chamberlain and solicitor-general, to levy a tax, in order to raise the funds necessary to meet the expense of his new palace. His subjects, who had not hitherto paid taxes, murmured loudly, and swore not to do so then; they even threatened to complain of him to the queen-mother. To their discontent, which as usual, was not very civilly expressed, were joined the remonstrances of Carbuncle, who insisted that it was ridiculous to make others pay for a thing which could be neither useful nor profitable to them; that his majesty was in truth, but a man like other men; that having his own property and revenues, he ought not to take those of others for the sake of having more to spend; that, consequently, while he had only the means of building a house, he ought not to have a castle; and that he, who had only a crown, ought to spend a crown only. All these reasons appeared very good to the king; but, at the same time, the solicitor-general and the chamberlain told him that he was master; that it was not worth while having subjects if they were not made to pay for the trouble that was taken in their government; that they were made to work and kings to spend; and that there was but one seneschal capable of thinking or advising otherwise. The king thought that they also reasoned very justly, and determined, consequently, to levy the tax. However, each of the councillors took his own side of the question, and loudly proclaimed his decision. "They shall not pay," said one party, "They shall be made to pay," said the other. "It shall not be so," said Carbuncle, "I am determined."—"It shall," said the solicitor-general, "or I will lose my Latin." At last they made such a hubbub that it would have been impossible to hear one's self speak. The king, who no longer understood what they said, and knew not what part to take, left them and when he was with the queen, said to her:—"Oh! by my sceptre if this continues I will give up governing, and then whoever wishes to be king may; and I will go so far, so far, that I will not hear speak of the kingdom, the people, nor the palace."—"Do not irritate yourself, Sire," said the queen to him quietly, "I have already had the honour of telling your majesty, that *every thing comes in time to him who can wait*."—"Odds fish," said the king, "what do you wish me to wait for? If they who have taken away our children, had left us a house instead of them, we should not have been so badly off; but doubtless Gangan has done it all; and, if this continue, we shall have no more houses than we have children." Then he commenced repeating so many tiresome invectives against the fairies, that the good Gilletta was much vexed with him.

The fairy who had witnessed for some time what was passing, and was very anxious for the queen's peace of mind, *at last appeared to her in the shape of a linnet,* as she had done before;



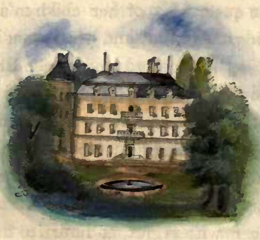
and quieted her with the assurance that she would soon give her convincing proofs of her friendship and protection. Gilletta, transported with joy, kissed her a thousand times, having first asked her permission, entreated her to stop, and promised her, as an inducement, that, every day, while she resided with her, she should have a little cake, made of millet-flour, hemp-seed and milk: the fairy agreed, and Gilletta's promises were duly fulfilled. A fortnight after her arrival, the king, who generally rose early, was very much surprised to find himself in quite a new house, very convenient, and strongly built: I say a house; for it was but a house, and not at all a palace;

there was about it neither architecture, painting, sculpture, nor gilding. On the ground-floor was a kitchen, a pantry, a dining-room and an audience-chamber; on the first-floor, an ante-chamber, a bedroom, a closet, the queen's wardrobe, and a large closet in a wing for the king, in which his library, of which mention has been made, was already arranged. Above were nice galleries, well ceiled, from which was visible the most beautiful prospect in the world. A dairy had not been forgotten, with all the *utensils* thereunto appertaining; but the

most admirable part of the whole affair was, that the house was well furnished and stored with every thing necessary: the furniture was exactly like, both in materials and shape, to that of their majesties, and they could hardly have told it apart, if the one had not been newer than the other. Petard's astonishment may be easily imagined, at finding himself in a strange house; but it was considerably increased when, on looking through one of his bed-room windows, he saw where had been his little royal kitchen-garden, a large grass plot and bowling-green, at the end of which was a very pretty pond, and a forest of lofty trees. To the right of the bowling-green was a kitchen garden, stocked with different vegetables, and to the left an orchard planted with all kinds *of fruit trees*. He considered all

this for some time: but, his surprise giving way to joy, he ran to the queen, who was in bed and still asleep, and waking her, cried: "My dear, my dear, pray get up, and look at our new house and fine gardens. Do you know the meaning of it all? I have not the least idea." The queen hardly gave herself time to put on her petticoat, morning-gown and slippers, before she ran to the window with the king, who immediately conducted her all round the apartments and thence to the ground-floor, where they found the kitchen and pantry furnished with every thing that was necessary. All these marvels only made good king Petard afraid; but the queen, who guessed whence it had all come, had not the same feeling, but dared not say any thing about it. They were in this state when the seneschal, who had been looking for them for an hour in the king's house, entered this, more in the way of the duty of his situation, than in the hope of finding their majesties there; he too knew not what to think of a house built in a single night; and although he was less fearful than his son-in-law, he only began to take courage when he found himself in company with them. The king, for his part, was glad enough to see him come in; and, each taking an arm of the queen, *they went over the house a second time from top to bottom, and all over the gardens.*

Every body argued a good deal on the singularity of this occurrence: some were of opinion that their majesties were very bold to reside in a house built by fairies, and so run the risk of being tormented by them; others, on the contrary, held that they did quite right, and that it was to be wished that all the old houses in the kingdom were rebuilt in a similar manner. As one is easily reconciled to comfort and to novelties, after

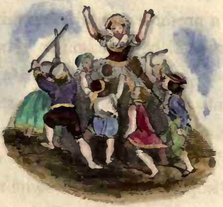


having talked a good deal, no more was said about it; and the king gradually grew as accustomed to his new house, as though he had lived in it all his life. Thus the question of the tax was no longer discussed; quietness returned to the kingdom of Petard, and union once more existed between the high crown officers. The poor architect alone, had half a mind to hang himself, but was at last contented with wishing all genii and fairies at the bottom of the sea, for interfering with his employment; calling them a hundred times magicians and sorcerers.

While the Fairy of the Fields was bringing about all these wonders, she observed in Gilletta so much respect for the fairies, and so much gratitude to her, that, feeling herself more and more interested in that queen's welfare, she could not refuse to make a longer stay at her court than she had originally intended.

She re-assured the queen also of her children's fate, and explained to her their punishment, and her reasons for proceeding to this extremity; but as true and tender friendship knows how to disguise the most interesting things when a knowledge of them would afflict the person loved, she carefully concealed from her the abduction of her dear Septimus, and the anxiety she felt for him herself; then, having recommended to her confidence, patience and discretion, if she wished to attain happiness, she quitted her with regret, to return to her government of the Isle of Bambine.

On her arrival there, she was immediately informed of an event, of a nature unheard-of since the establishment of the Island. The senior nurse, who, during the fairy's absence, had performed the duties of governess, stated to her that some obstinate and unruly children, who had been forgiven upon several occasions, assisted by their friends the dolls, *had revolted, and had expressed their determination of no longer obeying their nurses;* and that the spirit of rebellion had grown to such an extent in a short time, that its course had been with much difficulty arrested; that, she had therefore been compelled to exert all her authority, and had begun by imprisoning the dolls in boxes; and that as to the children, she had condemned some to have nothing but dry bread to eat for a fortnight; others to wear their nightcaps in the day-time for a month, and some



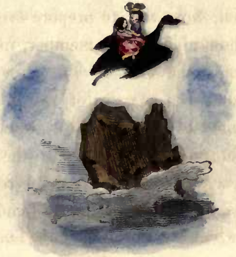
even to be imprisoned between four chairs, for two hours on each day, until they had publicly asked for pardon. The fairy highly approved of the senior nurse's conduct, and praised her very much for her zeal; but, as an example was necessary, for the maintenance of order, she condemned the most mutinous of the rebels to a transformation of a hundred years, as Punches, Judies and Dancing Dolls; sending them into different parts of the world, to work for their livelihood as puppets, and thus to minister to the amusement of all good little girls and boys, and to serve as sights for the people. She proceeded to this extremity with the less regret, as she was informed that her six favourites had taken but a small part in the rebellion. Charmed with the alteration which thus began to appear in them, she made them come before her, and, speaking to the tips of their noses (for she could see no more of them), she reprimanded them, in terms rather mild than severe, and dismissed them with a promise of her friendship and rewards, if she should, in the sequel, have reason to be satisfied with their conduct.

Though this event, and her duty, did not allow her absence from a place where, indeed, her presence seemed so necessary, yet she could not long contain her feelings on behalf of little Septimus, and her impatience to hear some news of him. So soon, therefore, as she thought her little people could go on tolerably well without her, she departed, with the hope of satisfying her curiosity, and of gratifying her fondness for the young prince. That she might not be perceived by the genii and fairies, who are continually traversing the middle region of the air, she took to her little post-chaise, which she carefully closed on all sides, providing herself with her wand and other articles of fairyism, above all not forgetting the invisible water; then, having ordered her *six flying lizards to use great speed,* she arrived in a few minutes at a short distance from the Inaccessible island. She alighted, dismissed her chaise, and rubbing herself over with the water just named, she overcame, without being seen, obstacles which, but for this liquid would have successfully opposed her entrance. Gangan had, in order to prevent genii and fairies from entering her island, surrounded it with a treble enclosure, formed by a rapid torrent,

the waters of which rolled over rocks which they had split with their violence, tearing up trunks of trees and dashing the fragments in the waves. The shores of this isle were defended by twenty-four dragons of enormous size; and the flames which they vomited at the sight of fairies or genii reached to the clouds, and, uniting, formed an impenetrable wall of fire.

The Fairy of the Fields had hardly been seeking for intelligence as to the fate of Septimus above an hour, when chance afforded her the most favourable opportunity in the world; she saw coming towards her Gangan, accompanied by a Dive, for she was only served by evil genii, and her countenance appeared inflamed with passion, and she spoke very vehemently. Profiting by her invisibility, the Fairy of the Fields, resolved to listen, when she heard Gangan speak to her companion nearly as follows: "Yes, my dear Barbarec, you see me in despair; I am about to lose for ever the largest kingdom of the universe. The ungrateful mother of Petard has died without even a desire to be reconciled with me; nor is that all, she has bound her subjects by an oath, not only never to receive at my hands a successor to her crown, but even to restore the throne to her son, or to one of her grandsons. I tried to win the people by my kindness, but found everywhere an inveterate hatred against me; they refused my gifts, which they looked on as equally perfidious and treasonable, and they have decided by an unanimous and formal resolution on following the queen's direction, by depriving me of a throne on which I had reckoned to place my niece. It shall not, however, be long ere this ungrateful people feel the effects of my just anger; and, to begin with the principal causes of my disgrace, take from my stables one of my largest griffins, fly to the Isle of Bambine, seize the brothers and sisters of Septimus, and bring them here. Myself will undertake to carry off Petard and Gilletta, and when they are brought together, I will transform the king and his queen into rabbits and their children into terriers.

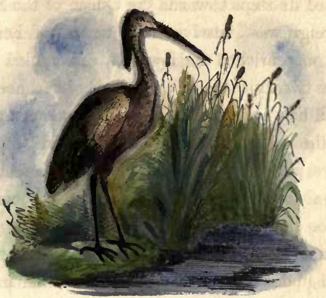
If a spark of pity which I yet feel for Septimus should abandon me, I will not answer that he also do not feel the effects of my vengeance. Hasten, however, to prepare every thing for the execution of my plans, and let us remember, my dear Barbarec, that having abandoned the laws of the Peris for those of the Dives, we are become the enemies of fairies and of mankind, and that we must neglect nothing to overwhelm them all with the weight of our hatred." The Fairy of the Fields could not hear this discourse without shuddering; she remained for some time motionless; but recalling her senses, and feeling of what consequence it was to stay any longer in this terrible abode, she hastened to implore the powerful assistance of the Queen of the Fairies. She immediately left the island, which she had scarcely done, when the sky became obscured, the earth trembled, and dreadful groanings, accompanied with thunder and lightning seemed to announce the speedy destruction of the universe. Shortly afterwards the air was restored to calmness; but the day growing still darker and darker, a new spectacle, as terrible as the preceding, succeeded, The twenty-four dragons who guarded the approaches to the isle, making frightful howlings, lanced against each other streams of flame and strove in fiery combat, which concluded by consuming them all. Day again re-appeared, and where the torrent and island had been, nothing was to be seen but a dry and arid rock, while from



its summit, there was seen to fly a black ostrich, *carrying on its back Prince Septimus and the little princess, Gangan's niece.* These prodigies had not so much overcome the Fairy of the Fields but that, moved with the situation of these amiable children and her kindness inclining her to follow them, she immediately set out with so much diligence, that, in a short time, she overtook the black ostrich. Her first impulse was to take from it the prince and princess; but observing that the bird was directing its flight towards the Fortunate Island, she contented herself with following and watching it at a short distance.

Indeed, in a short time, the ostrich alighted on that island,

and directed its steps towards the Queen of the Fairies herself. This sovereign was seated at the entrance of her palace on a golden throne enriched with jewels, surrounded by her twelve fairies, the twenty-four black genii who have been before mentioned, and by a numerous court. The moment the ostrich approached the throne, the Fairy of the Fields seized the prince and princess and placed them at the queen's feet; when Gangan resumed her original shape and proper character: confusion, malice and despair were depicted by turns on her countenance, and she was in the most cruel suspense as to what was about to happen, when the queen spoke to her in these words: "The malignity of your mind and the perversity of your heart have, I see, prevented your making a good use of that power which I bestowed upon you. Very far from repairing your first faults by the gift of Grand Fairyism, which the laws and my kindness vouchsafed to you, you have, on the contrary abused that, and as this abuse now calls for my justice upon you; receive at once the punishment due to your misdeeds. You will lose for two years all power as a fairy, and assuming during that period the shape of a stork, you shall be the slave of my humblest geni." With these words, the queen touched her with her sceptre; and all the fairies, having held over her their wands in token of approbation, they pronounced certain words, during which *the*

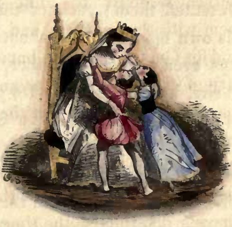


unfortunate Gangan became a Stork, and immediately went to join the other animals of the species.

The queen then summoned the fairy Judicious, and confided the young prince and princess to her care while they should remain at her court, particularly advising her to form their hearts by cultivating their minds; she embraced Septimus and Feliciana (which was the princess's name), and these amiable children, penetrated with joy and gratitude quitted her arms with sorrow for those of their guardian Judicious.

They profited so well by their education, during the two years they resided with the queen of the fairies, that they obtained the love and admiration of all her court. When the one had reached the age of fourteen and the other of twelve years, the queen of the fairies resolved to unite them in marriage, and to restore them with the brothers and sisters of Septimus to King Petard and his Queen Gilletta; but at the same time she informed the Fairy of the Fields that, as an example to Septimus and Feliciana, she had resolved that the rebellious children, although now perfectly cured of their faults, should only resume their proper shapes in the presence of the newly-married couple, and when they should have arrived at the king their father's palace. Then having determined the time of their departure, she confided to the Fairy of the Fields the six children of whom she had been so careful, and having ordered her to choose for them husbands and wives, she summoned the fairy Judicious, and charged her to accompany the Prince Septimus and his princess. *These amiable children shed tears on quitting her to whom they owed all their happiness,* and the generous queen, embracing them tenderly, promised them her friendship, and saw them depart with much sorrow.

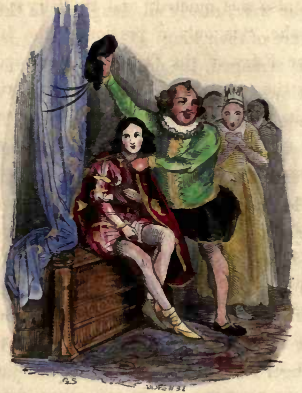
They lost no time in repairing to the court of Petard, where that king had been for some days extremely embarrassed. His mother, the queen, after languishing for many years, had at last vacated the throne, and deputies had been despatched from her kingdom inviting her son to accept the crown. They had already asked for an audience, and Petard was greatly



puzzled as to the manner in which it should be granted. He was uncertain whether he ought to receive them standing or seated, on horseback or on foot, and to debate this point the council was assembled, where everybody decided as usual; the seneschal Carbuncle maintained that the king ought to be standing, asserting that he had heard, that the Emperor Charlemagne and the twelve peers of France were always standing, and that they never seated themselves except to eat and to sleep. The solicitor-general opined that his majesty should be seated, because kings and judges ought always to be at their ease, and that except a bed, there was nothing so convenient as an arm-chair. The chamberlain, on the contrary, was of opinion, that the king should appear on horseback, alleging that that was the most noble attitude for kings, inasmuch as their statues always thus represented them; each of the councillors maintained as usual his own opinion; they shouted, they quarrelled, and would perhaps even have gone farther, if the king, raising his voice above theirs, had not said: "Do you intend to leave off? there is surely noise enough about a chair more or less! As I shall meet them, so they shall see me; and as they find me, so they must take me, that is all I know about the matter; but as to becoming their king, many thanks to them, I should go mad with all the cares of royalty, which they tell me, I should have on my mind. So, long flourish my little kingdom; since I am well off with that, I will hold fast to it; and they must accommodate themselves as well as they can: however, as they wish to have an audience, an audience they must have; so let them be summoned." The councillors then retired, each murmuring that the king had not taken his advice, and blaming him for always doing as he thought proper for himself.

While they went to fetch the deputies to the presence, his majesty, thinking himself wiser than his council, put on his royal clothes, and seated himself at the foot of his bed, of which he had had the curtains arranged in festoons around the posts; he held in one hand his sceptre, in the other his cap and fringed gloves; the queen was at his right hand, on a chair covered with blue serge and ornamented with large gilt nails, with her women behind her. On the left of the king were his high officers, who were, nearly all, laughing in their sleeves at the singular figure of their king.

When all was arranged, the door was opened, and the deputies entered, followed by all the people of King Petard's little state; they made him three deep salaams, which the king and queen acknowledged by three others as profound, and were about to commence their harangue, when a woman of majestic figure entered, leading a young man about fourteen or fifteen years of age, and addressing herself to Gilletta, thus spoke: "Queen, *every thing comes in time to him who can wait.* Your misfortunes are over, and your destiny has changed its course. Behold the prince your son, whom a superior power has protected from the effects of Gangan's wickedness; the perfidious fairy can no longer annoy him, her malice has just been confounded. Receive at last, your dear son Septimus; and you, deputies, render homage to the lawful successor to the throne of your kingdom." The king, acknowledging his son, took him in his arms and kissed him a thousand times; then hastening to the fairy, he embraced her without paying any regard to her age or character; he did the same with Carbuncle, the solicitor-general, the chamberlain and all who were around him; then *taking off his royal mantle, he put it upon Septimus, gave him his sceptre, seated him at the foot of the bed, and began*

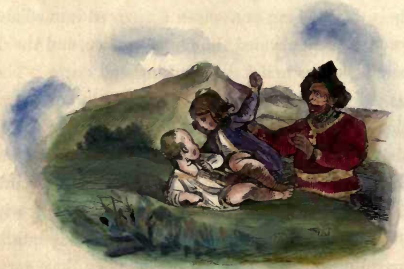


to shout with all his might : " Long live the king ! " which was immediately repeated by the nobles, and taken up by all the people, to whom the king kept crying out : " Shout away, you there, shout away !" Meanwhile the queen, penetrated with joy and gratitude, had fallen at the fairy's feet, embracing her and weeping ; when the fairy, having raised her, signified that she wished to speak. Every body was immediately silent excepting the king, whose joy was so great, that he neither saw nor heard anything, until at last, finding himself out of breath, he also was quieted, and the fairy spoke: "What you see," said she, "is only a portion of the favours which your friend, the Fairy of the Fields, bestows upon you: she gives you, with the prince, a young and amiable princess, whom the queen of the fairies has destined to be the wife of your king. If the qualities of her mind, and the beauty of her person, are some slight guarantee for the happiness of this favoured couple, the mildness of her character and the goodness of her heart, which I have taken pains to form, may assure to you its duration. Confirm then this happy union, and thus deserve the Fairy of the Fields' powerful protection, as well as that of ——" The king would hear no more, but taking the hands of the prince and princess: "Done," cried he, "I marry them with all my heart, and give to them all my kingdoms and my revenues; as to my other children, I shall trouble myself no more about them; our friend, this good lady of the fields, will not allow them to want for anything; so let us have the wedding and rejoice; you shall all dine with me, though, by the bye, I do not know that I shall have too much to give you; but, as my wife says, *every thing comes in time to him who can wait*. Now, father-in-law," he continued, turning to Carbuncle, "*go to the kitchen*, have all killed that is in my poultry-yard, and above all, let us have good cheer, for I

would have this affair well spoken of." The seneschal obeyed; but as he was crossing the dining-room, he perceived a table laid, with twenty-four dishes of the best meats. He went no farther, but quickly returned to relate to the king and queen what he had just seen. Every body, anxious to behold this fairy festival, went immediately to the dining-room, not, however, without some fear, and, consequently, without much ceremony. The sight surprised them greatly at first; they hesitated at tasting the victuals, but after a while, taking heart, began to think they looked very nice, and the king, to whom all this cost nothing, set them the example, by eating with all his heart, and drinking bumpers every time the bottle came round to him. It is said that he was not sparing of his old stories and *bons-mots*, but that although the good man often repeated them, and always in the same terms, they were always followed by shouts of laughter.

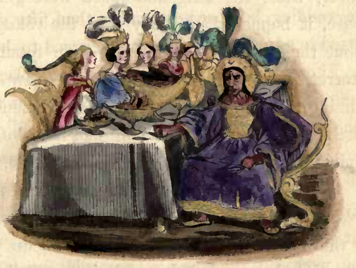
When they had been at table about two hours, violins were heard in the audience chamber; and as they had all eaten and drunk enough, they willingly rose from table. The king, in high good humour, wished for nothing better than a dance, and insisted on opening the ball with the young queen, calling for his favourite dance, "Sir Roger de Coverley." The violins struck up, and he began; but after putting them all out twenty times and telling them they did not know the figure, he gave up in despair, and asked the young prince and princess to dance a minuet, which they did with admirable grace. They were just performing the last obeisance, when six puppets entered the room finely dressed, three as Roman knights, and three as Roman ladies; each of these six puppets had by its side the visible tip of a nose, and the whole *entrée* was conducted by a lady, who was, however, taken little notice of, so much attention did the spectacle of the puppets attract. They all made room to receive them, and the puppets immediately performed a *pas de douze*, in which the six tips of the noses figured admirably. The *ballet* over, they arranged themselves in a ring, in the same order they had observed on entering. Their conductress placed herself in the centre, touched the six tips of the noses with the end of her wand, and immediately there appeared in their places, three Punchinellos and three Dancing-Dolls. " Very good, very good," said the king, " all that will do for my grand-children, and provided they cost me nothing to keep and clothe, I will take care of them with pleasure till the grand-children come."—" Not so fast, Sire," replied the lady, " have patience, *every thing comes in time to him who can wait.*" Immediately the twelve puppets began to dance again, and the spectators were in the highest degree astonished to see them change perceptibly, and gradually take another face and new dress. " Mercy on us ! " cried the king, " why, there are Harry, Dick and George, my dear ! why, surely there are Josephine, Clementina and Arabella, love !—no, really I cannot believe it.—Oh ! by my sceptre, but this is admirable." Then, speaking to their conductress : " Hold," said he to her, " I will bet my cap and royal mantle, that you are our friend, the lady of the fields ; i'faith you are worth your weight in gold, and here are our children, all ready shod and clad, and as big as their father and mother ; but how are we to get *them* married ?"—" I will manage that," replied the Fairy of the Fields, for it was herself, " and it shall be done immediately." At these words, the king, beside himself with joy, took her hand, paid her, I know not how many, compliments after his fashion, and seated her near Gilletta, to whom he cried: "This is the lady of the fields, and our very good friend." The queen, overcome by her feelings, gave herself up completely to all her gratitude to the fairy, and all her tenderness to her children. The fairy then introduced to Gilletta the unknown princes and princesses, who were with her, and proposed them in marriage with her six children. The king and queen consented immediately; all who were present applauded the fairy's choice, and the deputies proclaimed Septimus and Feliciana king and queen. The seven marriages were celebrated in a manner worthy of the wisdom of the fairy Judicious, and the noble simplicity of the Fairy of the Fields. Septimus gave to each of his brothers and brothers-in-law, the government of the largest and most wealthy provinces of his kingdom; and the seven princes set out with their wives, and accompanied by the fairies, who only quitted each on his arrival at their several capitals. They there gave them instructions for the government of their families and provinces: and, after loading them with marks of kindness and generosity, returned each to her own duties.

As for Petard and Gilletta, their children's fortune made them neither ambitious nor jealous, nor did it change their ways of thinking. The pomp and majesty of a grand queen did not agree with Gilletta's simplicity; while Petard's character and genius were not suited to the cares of a large kingdom; and they would not have exchanged, the one his seneschal, his game at piquet, and his kitchen-garden; the other, her spinning-wheel, her dairy, and the friendship of the Fairy of the Fields, for all the grandeur in the world.

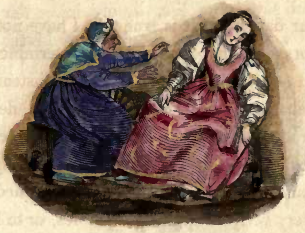


THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD.

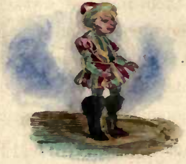
There was once upon a time a king and queen who were so very, very sorry at not having children, that it is impossible to express how sorry they were. They went to all the mineral springs in the world: vows, pilgrimages, every thing was tried, and nothing had the desired effect. At last, however, the queen was confined, and presented her husband with a daughter. There was, as you may suppose, a merry christening, the princess had for god-mothers all the fairies that could be found in the country, seven in number, in order that each of them making her a gift, as was customary with the fairies in those days, the princess might have all imaginable accomplishments. After the baptismal ceremony, the company returned to the king's palace, where there was a grand banquet for the fairies. Before each of them was put a magnificent dish, and a massive golden case, in which was a knife, fork and spoon of fine gold, set with diamonds and rubies. But, as they were taking their places at table, an old fairy was seen to enter the room who had not been asked to the wedding, because it was more than fifty years since she had quitted her tower, and she was believed to be dead or enchanted. The king had a dish like the others placed before her, but there was no massive gold case for her, as there was for each of the other fairies, because there were seven only made for the seven. The old woman thought that she was despised, and grumbled some threatening words between her teeth. One of the young fairies, who was near her, overheard her; and judging that she would endow the young princess with some evil gift, she went, on their rising from table, and concealed herself behind the tapestry, with the design of speaking last, and repairing, as much as should be possible, the evil that the old fairy should have done. Meanwhile the fairies began to make their gifts to the princess. The youngest ordained, as her gift, that she should be the most beautiful person in the world; the next, that she should have a mind like an angel; the third, that she should act, in all things, with an admirable grace; the fourth, that she should dance to perfection; the fifth, that she should sing like a nightingale; and the sixth, that she should be a perfect mistress of the art of playing on all kinds of musical instruments. *It now being the old fairy's turn, she said, shaking her head more with malice than with old age,* that the princess should wound her hand with a spindle, and thereby cause her own death. This terrible decree made all the company shudder, and there was no one who did not weep. But at that moment the young fairy appeared from behind the tapestry, and pronounced these words: "Cheer up king and queen, you shall



not lose your daughter, it is true that I have not power enough entirely to prevent what my senior has determined: the princess must wound her hand with a spindle, but, instead of its causing her death, she shall only be seized with a deep sleep, which shall last for a hundred years, at the end of which time a king's son shall awaken her." The king, endeavouring to evade the misfortune announced by the old fairy, published an edict, forbiddding every body to spin with spindles, or to have spindles in their houses, on pain of death. At the end of fifteen or sixteen years however, while the king and queen were gone to their country-house, it happened one day that the young princess, running about the castle, and mounting from room to room, reached a turret, in a little gallery of which she saw a good old woman spinning with her distaff. This good woman had never heard of the prohibition which the king had issued against this mode of spinning. "What are you doing, there, my good woman?" said the princess.—"I am spinning my pretty child," replied the old woman, who did not know her.—"Oh! how pretty that is?" said the princess. "How do you do it? —lend it me, that I may try if I can do it as well." She had scarcely taken the spindle, than, as she was rather lively and a little giddy, besides that the fairy's decree had so ordained it, she wounded her hand and fainted away. *The good old woman, in great perplexity, cried out loudly for help:* people arrived from



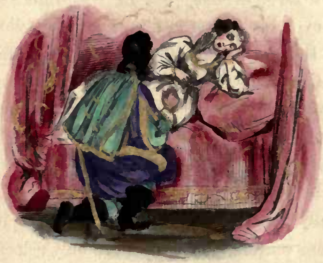
all sides; water was thrown on the princess's face; her stays were unlaced; her hands were shaken, and her temples bathed with Hungary water: but nothing would recover her. The king, who had ascended on hearing the noise, at once remembered the fairy's prediction, and rightly judged that what had occurred was its unavoidable fulfilment; so he caused the princess to be placed in the finest apartment of the palace, on a bed embroidered with gold and silver. She was so beautiful that she looked like a sleeping angel: her swoon had not dimmed the brilliancy of her complexion, her cheeks were of the delicate pink of the sweet carnation, her lips like coral; her eyes were closed indeed, but her bosom, as she still breathed, moved gently as the summer's wave and witnessed that she was not dead. The king gave orders that she should be allowed to sleep in quietness, until the time for her awaking should arrive. The good fairy who had saved her life, by ordaining her to sleep for a hundred years, was in the kingdom of Mataquin, thirty-six thousand miles off, when the accident happened to the princess; but she was immediately informed of it by *a little dwarf, who had a pair of seven-league boots:* these were boots with which one could stride seven leagues at a single step. The fairy immediately set out, for the princess's resting place, and arrived there in an hour's time in a fiery chariot drawn by dragons. The king hastened to present his hand to assist her in alighting from her chariot. She approved of all that he had done; but, as she was exceedingly provident, she thought that when the princess should awaken, she might be greatly embarrassed at finding herself alone in the old castle. So she touched with her wand all that was therein (except the king and queen);—governesses, maids of honour, chamber-maids, gentlemen, officers, stewards,



cooks, scullions, errand-boys, guards, porters, pages, and footmen: she touched also all the horses which were in the stables, the grooms, the mastiffs, and little Carlo, a small dog belonging to the princess, who was near her on the bed. On her so touching them they all went into a sleep, from which they were not to awaken until their mistress awakened also; that they might be ready to attend on her when the hundred years were completed. The spits at the fire even, which were loaded with partridges and pheasants, went to sleep, as did the fire also. All this took place in a moment: fairies were never long at their work. Then the king and queen having kissed their dear child, quitted the castle, and published decrees prohibiting any person whatever from going near it. These decrees were unnecessary; for in a quarter of an hour there grew, all over the park, such an immense quantity of *large and small trees, briars and thorns,* interlacing themselves with each other, that neither man nor

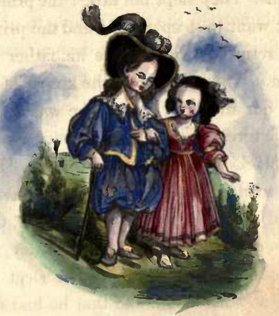
beast could have penetrated it: so that nothing more than the high keep of the castle was to be seen, and that from a good distance only. It was not doubted that the fairy had, in this instance, again exercised her vocation, in order that while the princess was sleeping, she might have nothing to fear from the curious.

At the expiration of a hundred years, a son of the king who was then reigning, and who was of a different family from that of the sleeping princess, being one day hunting thereabout, asked to what castle those towers belonged which he saw above the large thick wood. Every one answered him, according to report: some said that it was an old castle which was haunted by spirits; others that all the sorcerers of that country held their sabbath there. The best received opinion was, that an ogre dwelt there, who carried off all the children he could lay his hands on, and ate them there at his ease, without any one's being able to follow him, he alone having the power of making a passage through the wood. The prince knew not what to think of all this, when an old peasant said to him: "Your Highness, it is more than fifty years ago that I heard my father say, there was in that castle a princess, the most beautiful ever seen; that she must sleep there one hundred years, and that she would be awakened by a king's son, whom she was destined to marry." The young prince, at these words, felt himself quite inflamed with love; and he believed, without consideration, that he must be the one destined to put an end to so fine an adventure. Impelled by love and glory, he resolved immediately to gain the castle. He had hardly advanced towards the wood, when all the large trees, the briars and the thorns parted as he approached. He walked towards the castle which he saw at the end of a large avenue; but he was rather surprised to see that none of his people had been able to follow him, the trees having closed themselves again as soon as he had passed. He did not hesitate however to advance; a young and amorous prince is always courageous. He entered a large court-yard, in which all that he saw was at first enough to freeze him with fear. It was truly a frightful silence; the image of death was to be seen on all sides, in the extended bodies of men and animals. He soon perceived, however, very easily, by the pimpled noses and red faces of the porters, that they were only asleep; and their tankards, in which some dregs of wine still remained, sufficiently manifested that they had fallen asleep over their cups. He crossed a large yard paved with marble: he ascended the staircase; he entered the guard-room, where the guards were all in ranks with their carbines on their shoulders, snoring away most lustily. He passed through several rows of gentlemen and ladies, some sitting, some standing, but all asleep. At last he entered a chamber covered with gold · and saw on a bed, the curtains of which were opened all round, the most beautiful sight he had ever beheld: there lay a princess who appeared to be fifteen or sixteen years of age, the splendour of whose charms was almost divine. Drawing near, trembling with admiration, *he threw himself on his knees beside her*, when immediately, the end of the enchantment being come, the princess awakened; and, looking at him more tenderly than a first interview would appear to sanction: "Is it you my prince?" said she to him, "for whom I have so long been waiting?" The prince, charmed with these words, and still more with the manner in which they were spoken, knew not how to express his joy and gratitude; he assured her that he loved her better

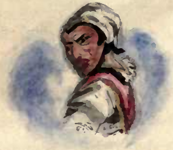


than his life. His discourse was perhaps badly arranged, but it pleased all the more: the less of eloquence the more of love. He was more embarrassed than she was, and it is not to be wondered at; for she had had time to dream on what she should say to him; for it would appear (although the history does not mention the circumstance) that the good fairy, during her long sleep, had provided her with the pleasure of agreeable dreams. However, they talked together for four hours, during which they had not time to say half the things which they had to communicate to each other.

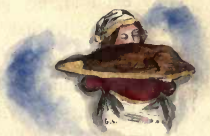
In the mean time all the palace had awakened with the princess and every body had returned to his duty; but as they were not all in love, they were dying with hunger. The lady in waiting, as hungry as the rest, grew impatient, and told the princess loudly that supper was on the table. The prince assisted the princess to rise; she was full dressed, and very magnificently: but the prince took care not to remark to her that she was dressed more like his grand-mother than after the fashion of the time, wearing a stand-up collar; however, she was not the less beautiful for that. They entered a saloon of mirrors, and there supped, attended by the princess's servants. Violins and hautboys played pieces of excellent music, although they were rather old, as it was nearly a century since they had been played before; and after supper, not to lose time, the chaplain married them in the castle-chapel, and the lady in waiting did the honours and drew their curtains. They slept but little: the princess as may be supposed did not want to sleep much; and the prince left her in the morning, to return to town where his father was anxiously enquiring for him. The prince told the king, his father, as an excuse for being out all night, that, as he was hunting, he had lost himself in the forest, and had slept in a collier's hut; where he had only had black-bread and cheese to eat. His father, who was a good easy man, believed him; but his mother was not entirely persuaded of the truth of his story; and, observing that he afterwards went hunting nearly every day, and that he always had an excuse ready, when he had slept two or three nights away, she no longer doubted that he had some intrigue in hand. He lived thus with the princess for more than two years, during which they had two children; of whom the first, a *a son*, was named *Apollo*, and the second *a daughter*, who being born at the break of day, was called *Aurora*. The queen spoke to her son several times, in order to make him explain, about his settling in life; but he never had the courage to intrust her with his secret: he feared her though he loved her; for she was of the ogress race, and the king had only married her for the sake of her large fortune. It was even whispered at the court that she was an ogress at heart; and that, when she saw little children playing, she had the greatest difficulty in the world to conquer



her inclination to eat them: of course therefore the prince said very little on the subject to her. But on the king's death, which happened about two years after his marriage, on becoming his own master, he publicly declared his marriage, and went in great pomp to bring the queen, his wife, to his castle. She entered the capital city, attended by Aurora and Apollo, through a magnificent triumphal arch raised for the occasion. Some time afterwards, the king going to war with the emperor Charlemagne, his neighbour, he left the regency of the kingdom in the hands of the queen his mother; strongly recommending to her care, his wife and children. As the campaign was likely to last all the summer, as soon as he had set out, the queen-mother sent her son's wife and children to a chateau in the midst of a large wood; in order to enable herself, the more easily, to glut her horrible desires. She followed them a few days afterwards; and one evening, desiring her steward to come to her, said: "I should like for my dinner, to-morrow, the little Aurora."—"Oh! my lady," exclaimed the steward.— "I desire it," said the queen (with all the energy of an ogress who has a longing for a favourite meal), "and you will serve her up with sauce *Robert.*" The poor man, *who knew well that it would not do to trifle with an ogress,* took his large knife, and ascended to the little Aurora's chamber. She was then about three years old; and ran, skipping and laughing, to throw her arms round his neck and ask him for some sweet-meat. He began to cry, and the knife fell from his hand. He left her and went to the fold, where he cut the throat of a little lamb; and, making a good sauce to it, served it up so well, that his mistress assured him, she had never

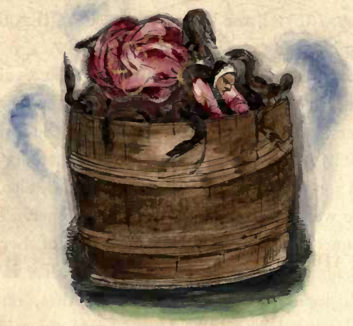


eaten any thing so good. He had the precaution to remove the little Aurora, giving her to his wife to conceal in a room which she had in a distant part of the chateau. A week afterwards, the wicked queen said to her steward: "I desire for my supper, to night the little Apollo." He did not reply as he expected the order; and had resolved to deceive her this time, as he had done before. He went therefore to seek the child, and found him fencing with a large ape: he was but four years old. The steward took him to his wife, who concealed him with the little Aurora, *and he then served up, instead of the little Apollo, a very tender little kid,* which the ogress declared to be admirably good.



All had gone very well so far; but one evening the wicked queen said to the steward: "I should like to eat the queen, with the same sauce which you have given me with her children." The poor steward was dreadfully afraid that he would not be able to deceive her this time; as the young queen was upwards of twenty, without reckoning the hundred years that she had slept away, and her skin was a little hard, although clear and white. How therefore to find in the farm-yard something, to pass for her, puzzled him exceedingly. He consequently resolved, in order to save his own life, to cut her throat; and ascended to her room, with the intention of doing so at once. He worked himself into a fury; and entered, dagger in hand, into the young queen's chamber. He did not, however, wish to surprise her; so related to her, with much respect, the order he had received from the queen-mother. "Proceed, proceed," said she, holding out her neck to him; "execute the cruel order you have received; I go to rejoin my children, my poor children, of whom I was so fond:" for she thought that they were dead, since they had been taken away, without her being told anything about them. "No, no, madam," answered the poor steward much affected, "you shall not die: you shall even rejoin your children; but it shall be in this world, and in my wife's room, where I have concealed them; and I will deceive the queen, once more, by making her eat a young dog instead of you." He then led her to his room, and, leaving her there to embrace her children and to weep with them for joy, he went and cooked the dog, of which the queen made her supper, eating with as much relish as though it had been the young queen herself. She was very well satisfied with her cruelty; and prepared herself to tell the king, on his return, that the wolves had eaten up his wife and children.

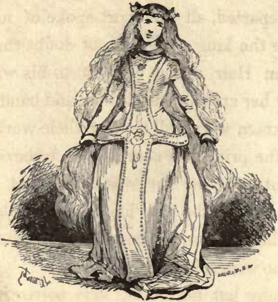
One evening, as she was roaming about, according to her usual custom, in the court and inner-yards of the castle, to get scent of some fresh meat, she heard, in one of the lower rooms, the little Apollo, who was crying because his mamma was about to whip him for being naughty; and she heard, also, the little Aurora, who was begging pardon for her brother. The ogress knew the queen's voice, as well as those of her children. Furious at having been deceived, she gave orders in a terrible voice which made every body tremble, that, on the next morning, a large tub should be brought into the middle of the court yard. *This tub she caused to be filled with toads, vipers, snakes and serpents*, intending to cast therein the queen and her children, the steward, his wife and his servant: she gave orders, also, to have them brought with their hands tied behind their backs. They were already there, and the executioners were getting ready to throw them into the tub, when the king, who was not expected back so soon, entered the court-yard on horseback. Thunderstruck with astonishment, he demanded the meaning of this horrible spectacle. No one dared to answer him, when the ogress, enraged at the turn affairs had taken, *threw herself headlong into the tub*, and was instantly devoured by the ugly beasts which she had assembled for the



execution of her horrible revenge. The king could not help being sorry for her crimes, for she was his mother; but he soon consoled himself in the society of his beautiful wife and children, whom his coming had so providentially saved from destruction.

THE FAIR ONE WITH THE GOLDEN HAIR.

THERE was once upon a time a king's daughter, who was so beautiful, that there was nothing else so beautiful in the world. In consequence of her exceeding beauty, she was called the "Fair One with the Golden Hair," for her locks were brighter than the brightest gold, and *flowed in admirable curls round her neck and down to her feet*. She was always seen with her curling ringlets, a crown of flowers on her head, and she wore clothes



embroidered with diamonds and pearls ; so that it was impossible to see her and not to love her.

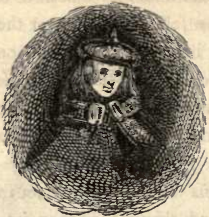
There was a young king, who governed a neighbouring state, very rich and handsome and as yet unmarried. When report bore to him the beauties of the Fair One with the Golden Hair, for he had never seen her, he fell so violently in love, that he could neither eat nor drink, and resolved to send an ambassador to ask her hand in marriage. He had a magnificent carriage built for his ambassador, he gave him upwards of a hundred horses and lacqueys, and charged him, on his life, to bring back the princess with him.

As soon as the ambassador had paid his respects to the king and had departed, all the court spoke of nothing but the princess; while the king, who did not doubt that the Fair One with the Golden Hair would consent to his wishes, prepared for her, against her arrival, fine clothes and handsome furniture. While the workmen were still busy at their work, the ambassador arrived at the princess's court, and declared the object of his coming; but, whether she was not on that day in the best humour or that she did not like the intended compliment, she answered the ambassador that she thanked the king for his offer, but had no wish to marry.

The ambassador left her court, very sorrowful at not taking the princess with him, carrying away all the presents which he had brought from the king; for she was very wise, and knew that it would not be right to receive his gifts and to refuse himself. She therefore declined to accept even the beautiful diamonds, merely taking, in order not entirely to displease the king, a quarter of a pound of English pins.

When the ambassador arrived at the king's city, where he was so impatiently awaited, every body was afflicted to see him return without the Fair One with the Golden Hair, and *the king wept like a child;* the courtiers tried to console him, but they could not succeed.

There was at this time at court a youth beautiful as the sun.



and who had the handsomest figure in the kingdom: he was so polite and witty, that he was named Graceful. Everybody loved him except the envious, who were vexed that the king treated him so well, and confided to him his most private affairs. Graceful being in company one day with some persons who were talking of the ambassador's return, and hearing it stated, with regret, that nothing had been effected, inadvertently said: "If the king had deputed me to the Fair One with the Golden Hair, I am confident that I could have induced her to return with me." These people being envious of Graceful, immediately went to the king and said to him maliciously: "Sire, what does your majesty think your friend Graceful says?—he asserts that if you had sent him to the Fair One with the Golden Hair, he could have brought her back with him. How vain and presumptuous he must be, Sire; he means that he is more handsome than you, and that she would have been at once so fond of him, that she would have followed him over the world." This, of course, put the king into so violent a passion, that he was quite beside himself. "What," said he, "does this minion dare laugh at our misfortune, and value himself above our royal person?—let him be confined immediately in the round tower, and there be starved to death."

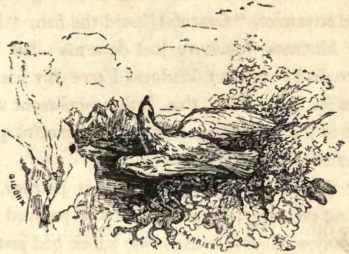
The king's guards immediately seized Graceful, who had never given a second thought as to what he had said, and dragged him to prison, making him suffer a thousand indignities. The poor youth had only a little straw for a bed; and he would certainly have died, but that a little spring flowing through the basement of the tower, he drank a little to refresh himself; for hunger had parched his mouth. One day when he was quite exhausted, he said, sighing deeply: "Of what can the king complain? He has not in his kingdom a more faithful subject than I am: nor have I, that I know of, ever done any thing to offend him." At this moment the king happened to be passing near the tower; and hearing the voice of one of whom he had been so fond, stopped to listen, in spite of those who were with him, and who hating Graceful, said to the king: "What are you about, Sire? does not your majesty know that he is a villain?" The king answered: "Silence, I wish to hear what he says." Having heard his complaints, tears came into his eyes; he opened the door of the tower, and called him. Graceful came forth very sorrowfully, and throwing himself before the king, embraced his knees, saying to him: "What have I done, Sire, to deserve such severe treatment?" "You have mocked me and my ambassador," said the king; "and have said, that if I had sent you to the Fair One with the Golden Hair, you would certainly have brought her back with you."—"It is true, your majesty," answered Graceful; "I would have so well convinced her of your good qualities, that I am persuaded she would not have had it in her power to refuse me; and in that I said nothing which could be disagreeable to you." The king then found that he had not been wronged by his favorite and giving an angry look to his traducers, he took him in his arms, deeply repenting the injury he had done him.

When he had eaten an excellent supper, the king sent for him into his cabinet, and said: "Graceful, I still love the Fair One with the Golden Hair; her refusal has not disheartened me; but I do not know how to persuade her to marry me. I should like to send you to her court, to see whether, indeed, you would be able to succeed." Graceful answered that he desired to obey him in every thing, and would set out the next day. "Hold!" said the king, "I wish to send you with a magnificent equipage."—"That is unnecessary," answered Graceful, "I only want a good horse and your instructions." The king embraced him, for he was delighted to see him so easily equipped.

It was on a Monday morning that he took leave of the king and his friends to depart on his mission alone, without pomp or ceremony, His whole thoughts were on the means of inducing the Fair One with the Golden Hair to marry the king; he carried with him in his pocket a memorandum book, and when a good idea struck him for his speech, he alighted from his horse and seating himself under the trees, made a note of it, so as to forget nothing. One morning when he had resumed his journey very early, as he was crossing a large meadow, a very bright idea occurred to him; so he alighted, and seated himself by the willows and poplars which grew on the banks of a streamlet that watered one side of the meadow. After he had noted his thoughts, he looked around him, charmed to find himself in so delightful a place. He perceived on the grass a large gilded carp, which was feebly gasping, for it could do no more. In endeavouring to catch some little flies, it had leaped so high out of the water, that it had thrown itself on the grass, and was at the point of death for want of its natural element. Graceful took pity on the poor carp, and although it was a fast day, and he therefore might have kept it for his dinner, he lifted it up very gently and replaced it in the streamlet. As soon as Mistress Carp felt the freshness of the water, she rejoiced greatly and sank to the bottom; then returning merrily to the bank of the streamlet, "Graceful," said the fish, "I am grateful for the kindness you have just done me: but for you, I should have died; to your kindness I owe my life and I will reward you for it." After this little compliment she dived to the bottom of the stream again, and left Graceful quite astonished at her wit and civility.

Another day as he was continuing his journey, he saw a crow in great distress; the poor bird was pursued by a large eagle (a notorious devourer of crows) which had just caught it, and would have swallowed it like a lentil, if Graceful had not taken compassion on the unfortunate bird. "Thus," reflected he, "the strong oppress the weak: what right has the eagle to eat the crow?" He took his bow, which he always carried with him, and an arrow: then taking a steady aim at the eagle, twang, he lodged an arrow in his body, piercing it through and through. *Down fell the eagle dead;* and the crow in ecstacies perched it itself on a tree.—"Graceful," said the the crow to him, "you are very kind to have succoured me; I am but a poor bird, but I will not be ungrateful, and will do you as good a turn."

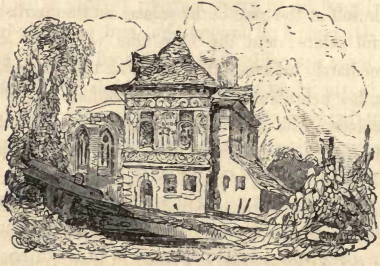
Graceful admired the crow's intelligence and continued his road. He entered next day into a large wood, so early in the morning that he could hardly see his way, when he heard an



owl screeching like an owl in despair. "Hey day," said he, "that owl must be in great sorrow; perhaps it is taken in a snare." He peered all around him, and presently indeed observed a large net, which had been placed there by some bird-catchers in the night to catch small birds. "What a pity," said he, "that men are only made to torment each other or to persecute poor animals, which never do them any wrong." He then drew his sword, and cut the cords which held the net. The owl took flight: but returning after it had stretched its wings, *it perched itself on a branch, and said:* "Graceful it is unnecessary for me to make you a long harangue in order to enable you to comprehend the obligation that I am under to you; it speaks for itself. The fowlers were coming, I should have been taken

and put to death but for your assistance: I have a grateful heart, and will do you as good a turn."

These are the three most important adventures that befel

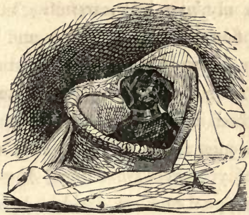


Graceful on his journey; he was in such haste to execute his mission that he did not lose a moment on his way to *the palace* *of the Fair one with the Golden Hair.* Every thing there was charming; diamonds were lying about in heaps like common stones; rich clothes, sweetmeats and silver were there in profusion; and he thought that if she left all this to marry the king his master, he would have great reason to rejoice in the success of his mission. He dressed himself in a suit of rich brocade, and wore a plume of carnation and white feathers; he washed his face, combed and powdered his hair, put round his neck a richly embroidered scarf, carrying with him a small basket in which was a pretty little dog that he had purchased as he passed through Boulogne. Graceful was so handsome, so amiable, and did every thing so gracefully, that when he presented himself at the gate of the palace, all the guards made him a respectful salute; and the Fair One with the Golden Hair was immediately informed that Graceful, the ambassador from the king, her neighbour, requested an audience.

The princess, when she heard Graceful's name, said: "I like that name, and I dare say that he is pretty and pleases every body."—"Yes indeed," said her maids of honour, "we saw him, from the store-room window, while we were dressing your flax; and, so long as he was in sight, we could do no work."—"That's very pretty, indeed," answered the Fair One with the Golden Hair, "to amuse yourselves with looking at a young man. Come, give me my embroidered blue satin gown, and dress my hair very carefully; let me have some chaplets of fresh flowers, my high shoes and my fan; let my audience-chamber be swept and my throne dusted; for I wish him to make it known everywhere that I am indeed the Fair One with the Golden Hair."

Then all her women employed themselves in dressing her in a most queenly style: they were in such haste however, that they somewhat hindered each other and made but slow progress. At length she went into her hall of mirrors to see if any thing was wanting; which done, she ascended her throne, which was made of gold, ivory and ebony, and perfumed with balsam. She then desired her maids of honour to take their instruments, and sing and play very sweetly, but so softly as not to stun the ambassador.

When Graceful was ushered into the hall of audience, he was so transported with admiration, that he many times afterwards said that he could hardly speak, but at length he took courage and made his harangue admirably well, entreating the princess, not to let him be so unfortunate as to return without her. "Gentle Ambassador," answered the Fair One, "all the arguments you have used to me are very good, and I assure you that I should be very happy to favour you in preference to any other; but you must know that a month ago I was walking by the river-side with all my



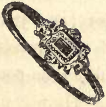
ladies; and, as refreshments were handed to me, I pulled off my glove, in doing which I pulled off my finger a ring, which fell unfortunately into the river: that ring I prized more than my kingdom; so I leave you to judge of my affliction for its loss. I have since taken an oath never to listen to any proposals of marriage, except the ambassador, who makes such proposals, shall recover my ring. Under these circumstances, you see what you have to do; and though you talk to me a fortnight, without ceasing day or night, you will not induce me to change my resolution." Graceful was astounded at this answer. He made her a low bow, and *begged her to accept the little dog, the basket, and the scarf;* but she answered that she wanted no presents, and that he knew her mind.

When Graceful reached his lodgings, he went to bed supperless; and his little dog, named Dolce, would take no supper either, but went and laid himself down near his master.

Graceful sighed all night long, repeating: "Where shall I find a ring dropped, more than a month ago, into a large river? it would be folly to undertake it. The princess but desires me to undertake what she knows is impossible to accomplish." He sighed again, and was very sorrowful. Dolce, who had been listening, said to him: "My dear master, pray do not despair of your good fortune; you are too good to be otherwise than happy: so when daylight appears, let us go to the river side; I will assist you." Graceful, annoyed, gave him a slight blow with his hand, and made no answer; but, overwhelmed with sorrow, he soon fell asleep.

When Dolce observed that it was daylight, he awakened Graceful by barking, and said: "Master, dress yourself, and let us go out." Graceful was now willing to go with him; so he arose, dressed himself, and descended into the garden, and from the garden he wandered insensibly to the river side. He was walking along, with his hat over his eyes, his arms crossed before him, only thinking of his departure, when all at once he heard a voice calling: "Graceful! Graceful!" He looked all around him, and as he could see no one, thought that he had been mistaken. He was proceeding in his walk, when he heard the voice again calling: "Graceful! Graceful!" "Who calls me?" said he. Dolce, who was very little, and was looking very closely into the water, answered: "Never trust me if it be not a gilded carp." Immediately, the carp rose to the surface and said to Graceful: "You saved my life in the poplar meadow, where I should have perished but for your assistance; I promised to be even with you: here dear Graceful, is the ring that the Fair One with the Golden Hair had lost." Graceful stooped, and took the ring from Mistress Carp's mouth, and thanked her a thousand times.

Instead of returning home, he went directly to the palace with the little Dolce, who was very glad that he had prevailed on his master to go with him to the river side. The princess was informed that he demanded a second audience. "Alas!" said she "the poor youth is coming to take his leave of me; he knows that what I require is impossible, and is about to depart to tell his master so." Graceful was conducted into her presence, when he presented to her, her ring, saying: "Behold, your majesty, I



have fulfilled your request; and now, I trust, you will receive my royal master for your consort." *When she saw her ring safe* *and sound,* she was surprised, so very much surprised that she thought she was dreaming. "Really," said she, "courteous Graceful, you must be favoured by a fairy, for naturally, this is impossible."—"Madam, said he, "I am unacquainted with any fairy; but your commands I was anxious to obey." "Well, then, since you have so good a will," continued she, "you must do me another service, without which I will never marry. There is a prince who does not reside very far from here, called Galifron, who has a great desire to marry me. He declared his mind to me with the most dreadful menaces, stating that, if I would not accept him, he would desolate my kingdom with fire and sword. But judge whether I can marry him, when I inform you that he is a giant as tall as a steeple; and that he eats a man, as an ape eats a chestnut. When he goes into the country, he carries small cannons in his pockets, which serve him instead of pistols; and when he speaks very loud, those who are near him become deaf for ever. I informed him that I did not wish to marry, and that he must excuse me; however, he has not ceased to persecute me, slaying my subjects unmercifully; you must, therefore, first of all fight him and bring me his head."

Graceful was rather astonished at this proposition; but having pondered for a few moments, he answered: "Well, your majesty, I will fight Galifron; I believe that I shall be conquered, but I will die as becomes a brave man." The princess was not a little surprised, and now used a thousand arguments to dissuade him from the enterprise, without effect: he withdrew to seek his arms and other things necessary for the expedition. Being quite ready, he replaced Dolce in his basket, mounted his fine steed, and presently arrived at Galifron's dominions. He enquired about him of every one he met, and was invariably answered that Galifron was a wicked demon, whom no one dared go near. Every time he heard this, he became more and more discouraged. Dolce, however, cheered him, with these words: "My dear master, while you are fighting him, I will bite his legs; he will stoop to lay hold of me, and then you must kill him." Graceful admired his little dog's wit; but he was well aware that this help would not be more than sufficient.

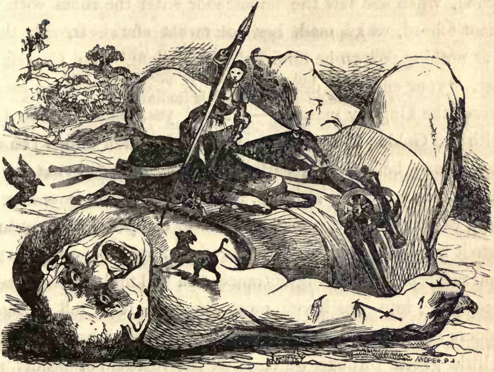
After a while he drew near Galifron's castle; all the roads leading to it were strewed with the bones and carcases of men whom he had eaten or torn to pieces. He was not long before he saw the giant coming through a wood; his head was taller than the tallest of the trees, and he sang in a terrible voice:

"O! for a meal of children's flesh,
Tender, new-killed, young and fresh,
My teeth are sharp, and half a score
Will serve 'till I can get some more."

Graceful immediately sang to the same air:

"Approach, approach for Graceful's near,
Who from your jaws your teeth will tear;
Though not your match in size, you'll find
One who to conquer you's inclined."

The metre was not very regular, but it was sung so hastily, that it is a miracle that it was not worse; besides that he was exceedingly afraid. When Galifron heard these words, he looked all round him, and perceived Graceful, sword in hand, who uttered two or three abusive epithets to irritate him. They were however quite unnecessary; the giant put himself into a terrible passion; and taking an immense iron mace, he would, with the first blow, have crushed the gentle ambassador, had not a crow at that moment alighted on his head, and picked at his eyes so adroitly, that he picked them out; his blood ran down his cheeks and he became desperate, laying about him on all sides. Graceful took care to avoid his blows, and gave him so many wounds, thrusting his sword each time up to the hilt, *that his blood escaped from a thousand places, and he fell down exhausted.* Graceful then cut off his head, transported with joy at his good fortune, and the crow from the branch of a tree said to him: "I do not forget the service you did me, in killing the eagle that had taken me; I promised you to acquit myself of the



obligation, and I think I have done so to day."—"I acknowledge your kindness, Master Crow," replied Graceful, "and am your debtor and humble servant." He then mounted his horse, and set off with Galifron's horrible head.

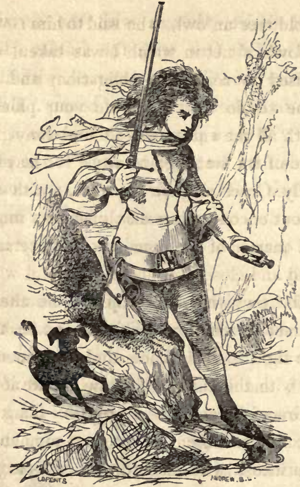
When he arrived at the city, every body followed him crying: "Long live the brave Graceful, who has just slain the monster Galifron." The princess heard the noise very plainly, and was in an agony of fear lest any one should bring her news of

Graceful's death: she was therefore afraid to ask what had happened, when she saw the ambassador enter the room with the giant's head, which made her somewhat afraid, though there was nothing now to be afraid of. "Madam," said Graceful to her, "your enemy is dead, and I hope that you will no longer refuse the king my master."—"Alas! yes," said the Fair One with the Golden Hair, "I must still refuse him unless you can find means, before my departure, to bring me some water from the gloomy grotto. There is, at a short distance from here, a deep cavern which is eighteen miles in compass; the entrance into it is guarded by two dragons who allow no one to pass; if you succeed in obtaining entrance, you will find an exceedingly deep hole, into which you must descend: it is full of toads, adders and serpents. At the extreme end of this hole is situated a little grotto through which flows the fountain of beauty and health: some of this water I must absolutely have. Its virtues are truly wonderful; if the person who uses it be beautiful, she always remains beautiful; if young, she is perpetually young; if ugly, she becomes handsome; and if she be old, she becomes young again. Now judge, Graceful, whether I will quit my kingdom without carrying some of this water away with me."

"Madam," answered he, "you are so beautiful that this water will be perfectly useless to you; but I am an unfortunate ambassador whose life you wish to take away, so I will go and seek what you desire, though with the certainty of never returning." The Fair One with the Golden Hair would not abandon her desire; and Graceful departed, with little Dolce, for the gloomy grotto to seek the water of beauty. Every body who met him said: "What a pity that so amiable a youth should thus sacrifice his life; he is going alone to the gloomy grotto, where though she sent a hundred times, she could not obtain her object. Why does the princess only long for impossibilities?" Graceful heard them, but continued his journey in silence, and very sorrowfully.

After a while he arrived at the top of a mountain, where he sat down to rest himself, allowing his horse to graze, and Dolce to chase the flies. He knew that the gloomy grotto was not very far off, and looked about him to see if he could not discover it; presently he observed a horribly black rock, whence a dense smoke was issuing, and the next moment he saw one of the dragons who was casting forth fire from his eyes and mouth; his body was green and yellow, he had immense claws and a long tail disposed in more than a hundred folds: Dolce observed it also, and was so frightened that he did not know where to hide himself.

Graceful prepared to meet his death, drew his sword, and descended with a phial which the Fair One with the Golden Hair had given him to fill with the water of beauty. He said



to his little dog: "This will be my end Dolce! I shall never be able to procure this water; it is so well guarded by the dragons; when I am dead, fill the phial with my blood, and carry it to the princess that she may see what her rigour has cost me; then find the king my master, and relate to him my misfortune." As he was saying these words, he heard a voice call: "Graceful, Graceful!" He replied: "Who calls me?" when he saw in the hollow of an old tree an owl, who said to him: "You liberated me from the fowlers' net in which I was taken, and saved my life; I promised to repay the obligation, and the time has arrived for me to do so. Give me your phial; I am well acquainted with all the entrances to the gloomy grotto, and will fetch you some of the water of beauty." I leave you to imagine how gladly Graceful gave the phial, with which the owl entered, without encountering any obstacle, into the cavern. In less than a quarter of an hour, the owl returned with the phial well filled and closely stopped. Graceful was in ecstacies, and thanked the owl with all his heart; he then re-ascended the mountain, and joyfully re-took the road leading to the city.

He went straight to the palace, and presented the phial to the Fair One with the Golden Hair, who had no more to say; she thanked Graceful, gave orders for every thing to be prepared for her departure; and then, all being ready, she set out with him. The princess who thought he was amiable, said to him: "If you had wished it I would have made you king; it would not then have been necessary to leave my kingdom;" but he answered: "I would not have been guilty of so wicked a piece of treachery to my master, for all the kingdoms of the earth, though I confess that your beauty is more dazzling than the sun."

They presently arrived at the king's capital; and the king knowing that the Fair One with the Golden Hair was coming, went forth to meet her, and made her the handsomest presents in the world. The nuptials between them were celebrated with so many rejoicings that nothing else was spoken of; but the Fair One with the Golden Hair, who in her heart preferred Graceful to the king, was never easy when he was out of her sight, and was continually praising him. "Had it not been for Graceful," she would say to the king: "I should certainly not have come; for my sake he performed impossibilities; you are under infinite obligations to him; he procured me the water of beauty, so that I shall never grow old, and shall always be beautiful."

Graceful's old enemies who overheard the queen's words, said to the king: "You are not jealous, and yet you have cause enough to be so: your queen is so violently in love with Graceful, that she can neither eat nor drink; she speaks incessantly of him and the obligations you owe him, as though another ambassador would not have met with the like success." The king answered: "Indeed I am now sensible enough of the truth of what you tell me; let him be taken to the round tower and fettered hand and foot." Graceful was seized; and as a return for all his faithful services to the king, he was again incarcerated and heavily chained. He saw no one but the gaoler, who threw him a morsel of black bread through a hole in the wall, and left him some water in an earthen porringer.

However, his little dog Dolce did not leave him, but consoled his master by informing him of all the news of the day.

When the Fair One with the Golden Hair was informed of Graceful's misfortune, she threw herself at the king's feet, and besought him, all in tears, to release the prisoner from his confinement. But the more she entreated, the more angry the king became, thinking that her affection for Graceful, alone, prompted her supplications. As she could not prevail, she said no more, but became very sad and low-spirited.

The king took it into his head, that perhaps he was not handsome enough for her; so he determined to wash his face with the water of beauty, with the design of causing the queen to conceive a greater affection for him than she then had. The water was in a phial which stood on the mantel-piece in the queen's bed chamber. She had placed it there that it might never be out of her sight; but as one of her chamber-maids was killing a spider with a broom, she accidentally overturned the phial, which, falling on the floor, broke into a thousand pieces, and all the water was lost. She swept the pieces quickly away, and not knowing what to do, remembered to have seen in the king's closet, a phial, exactly resembling the one she had broken, full of a clear liquid like the water of beauty; so without saying a word of what she had done, she removed it dexterously from where it was standing to the queen's mantel-piece.

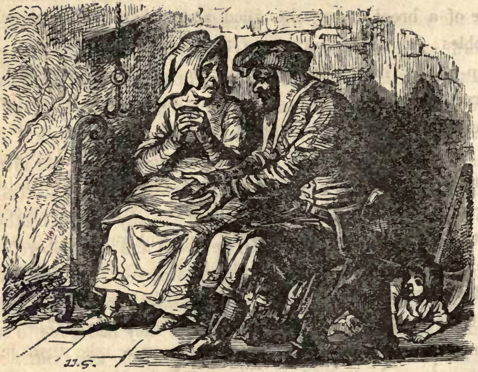
The liquid which was in the king's closet was a certain poison that he made use of to put to death the great lords and nobles of his court when they were convicted of any great crime. Instead of having their heads cut off or hanging them, their faces were rubbed with this water, which threw them into a profound sleep from which they never awakened. Accordingly one evening the king took the phial from the mantel-piece in the queen's chamber, and rubbing his face over well with the liquid that was in it, fell into a deep sleep, and died. The little Dolce was one of the first who heard of it, and did not fail to inform Graceful of what had taken place, when his master desired him to seek the Fair One with the Golden Hair, and remind her of the poor prisoner.

Dolce slipped quietly through the crowd, for there was a great bustle and confusion about the court, on the king's death. "Madam," said he to the queen, "do not forget the poor Graceful."

She but too well remembered the misfortunes he had suffered for her sake, and his great fidelity; so she went out without saying a word to any one, immediately entered the tower, and herself took off the shackles from his hands and feet; which done, she placed a golden crown upon his head and the royal mantle over his shoulders, saying to him: "Come amiable Graceful, I will make you a king, and take you for my husband." Graceful threw himself on his knees, and thanked her in the most fervent and respectful manner. All the people were enchanted to have him for their king: the wedding-feast was the most gorgeous that was ever seen; and the Fair One with the Golden Hair long reigned with the handsome Graceful, each of them happy and contented in the enjoyment of the other.

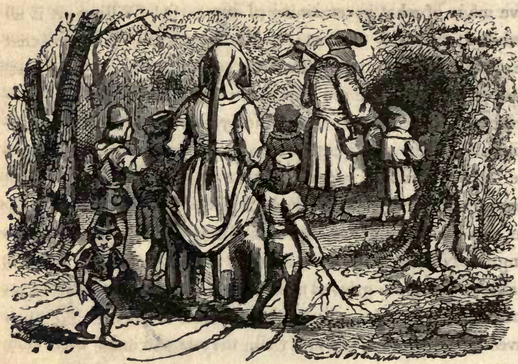
HOP-O'-MY-THUMB.

There was once upon a time a wood-cutter and his wife who had seven children, all boys; the eldest was ten years old and the youngest only seven. It was rather strange that the wood-cutter had had so many children in so short a period; but the truth is that his wife always had at least two at a birth. They were very poor, and their seven children were a heavy burthen to them, for not one of them was yet old enough to earn his bread. What made the matter worse was the circumstance that the youngest child was a weakly little fellow, never saying a word, which they took to arise from stupidity, while in fact it was a sign of his wit. He was very little, indeed, when he was born he was no larger than a man's thumb; which induced his father and mother to christen him "Hop-o'-my-Thumb." The poor child was the drudge of the whole house, and was always blamed for whatever was wrong. Notwithstanding all this, he was more clever and more knowing than any of his brothers, and though he spoke but little, he heard and remembered all. About this time there fell out a very scarce year, and the famine was so grievous that the poor people resolved to get rid of their children altogether. One evening after they had gone to bed, and the parents were sitting near the fire, *the wood cutter said to his wife, his heart being torn with anguish,* "You see that we can no longer keep our children: I cannot see them die of hunger before my face, and am resolved to lose them to morrow in the forest, which will not be very difficult to do; for, while they are amusing themselves with tying up the faggots, we have only to slip away from them unperceived."—"*Ah! husband,*" *cried the poor woman,* "could you be so hard-hearted as to lose your own children?" In vain her husband for a long time represented to her their great distress; she would not consent: she was poor, but she was their mother. However, at



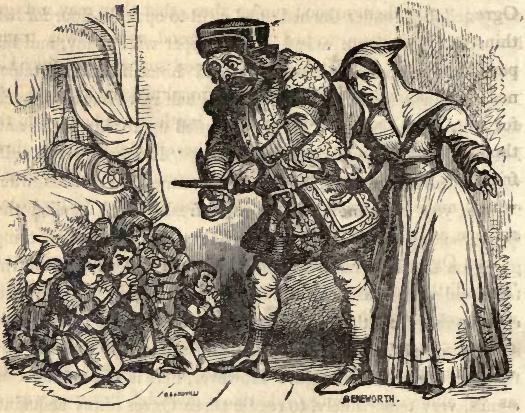
last, having considered how dreadful it would be to see them die of hunger before her eyes, she agreed to her husband's proposal and went weeping to bed. Hop-o'-my-Thumb had overheard all their conversation; for, having when in bed heard his father talking very seriously, he had quietly risen, and slipped under the stool on which his father and mother were sitting, and listened to them without being seen. When his father and mother had left off talking, he went back to his bed again; but slept no more that night, thinking of what he should do in the morning. He got up very early, and went to the side of a brook, where he filled his pockets with little white pebbles; he then returned to the house. They set out, and Hop-o'-my-Thumb did not mention a word of what he had learned to his brothers. They went into a very thick forest, where the trees grew so closely together that they could not see each other when they were ten steps apart. The wood-cutter went to his work, cutting down trees, while his children began to pick up sticks to make faggots. When the father and mother saw them busily employed, they suddenly gave them the slip, and returned home by a bye path. As soon as the poor children found themselves alone, they began to cry, calling out for their parents as loudly as they could. Hop-o'-my-Thumb let them cry on, knowing very well, the way to take them home again ; for as he had come to the wood, *he had taken good care to drop all along the road, the white pebbles with which he had filled his pockets*. After a while, however, he said to them : "Do not be afraid my lads, our father and mother have left us here, but I will conduct you safely home again ; only follow me. He then led the way and took them back to their cottage, by the same road they had come to the forest. They were at first afraid to go in, and stationed themselves against the door to listen to what their father and mother were saying.

Just as the wood-cutter and his wife had arrived at their



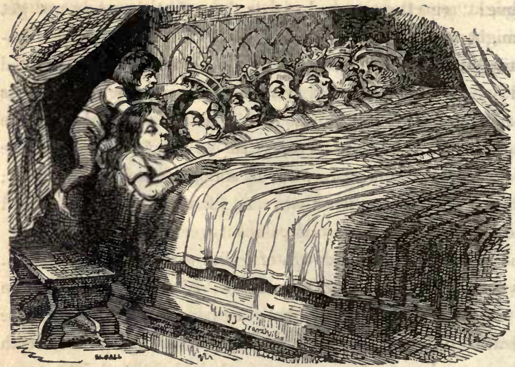
home, the lord of the village had sent them ten dollars which he had owed them a long time, and which they had given up all hopes of ever being paid. This money came just in time to save their lives, for the poor folks were nearly dying with hunger. The wood-cutter immediately dispatched his wife to the butcher's. As it was a long time since they had eaten anything, she bought three times as much meat as was necessary for two people's supper. When they had satisfied their hunger, the mother began to sigh, and said to her husband: "Alas!

where are our poor children now? what a good supper would they have made of what is remaining of ours. O! William, it is all your fault that they are lost; I said, over and over again, that we should certainly repent leaving them to starve in the forest. Oh! Heavens, where are they now; the wolves, perhaps, have already devoured them; how cruel you were to abandon your children." The wood-cutter soon began to grow impatient, for she kept continually repeating, that they would deeply repent this cruelty, and that she had all along said how it would be. He threatened therefore to beat her if she did not hold her tongue. Not that the wood-cutter was not quite as much, and perhaps even more grieved than his wife; but she exhausted his patience; in fact he was like most other men who like their wives to talk wisely, but find them very importunate when their advice has been neglected. The poor woman shed abundance of tears, repeating: "Alas! where are my children now, my poor children." At last, she spoke so loud, that her children, who were at the door, heard her, and cried out all together: "Here we are! here we are!" She quickly ran to open the door for them, crying as she embraced them: "How glad I am to see you again, my dear, dear children! how tired you must be. Why poor little Peter, you are all over dirt; come and let me wash your face." Peter was her eldest child, and she loved him better than all his brothers because he was like her, in having red hair. They all sat down to table, and ate away with so good an appetite, that it quite rejoiced their father and mother to see them; meanwhile they recounted the fear they had been in, when they found themselves alone in the forest; almost always speaking at once. The poor people were in ecstacies at once more recovering their children, and their joy lasted until the ten dollars were spent; but when the money was all gone, and they sank into their former state of distress again, they resolved once more to get rid of their little ones, and to take good care to lead them much farther into the forest, than they had done on the former occasion; so that they should not be able to find their way back again. They did not however talk the matter over so quietly, but that they were overheard by Hop-o'-my-Thumb, who reckoned on doing as he had done before; but though he arose very early to seek the pebbles, he was not able to manage it, as he found the door double locked. He did not know what to do; when, their mother having given each of them a slice of bread for their breakfast, the idea struck him of using his piece of bread as he had before used the pebbles, by scattering it in crumbs all along the way they should go; so he thrust it into his pocket. The father and mother presently led them to the darkest and thickest place in all the forest, and after they had managed to slip away from their children, returned home. Hop-o'-my-Thumb did not give himself much concern, for he made sure of easily travelling the road by which they had come, by the help of the bread crumbs that he had dropped along the road. But what was his surprise, when he set about looking for them, at not finding a single crumb; for the birds had eaten them all up. The poor children now were in a sad plight; for the farther they wandered, the deeper they got into the forest. Night set in; and a high wind arose, the noise of which among the trees frightened them dreadfully. They fancied that they heard, on all sides, the howlings of wolves, who were about to devour them. They hardly dared to speak or turn their heads. A heavy rain then began to fall, which soon wetted their clothes through and through; they slipped at every step they took; and kept falling down in the mud, from which they arose, with difficulty, covered with dirt. At last Hop-o'-my-Thumb climbed to the top of a tree, to see if he could discover any way out of the forest; when, as he was peering very wistfully all around him, he observed a small light, apparently from a candle; but it was a long distance off and beyond the forest. He descended from the tree; but was grieved to find that he could not see it, in any direction, when he was on the ground. However, after he had walked some distance with his brothers, in the direction he fancied the light to be, he once more discovered it; just as they reached the extremity of the wood. After a while they arrived at the house, in which the candle was burning; but not without some trouble: for they lost sight of it several times, as they were passing parts of the road that lay low. They knocked at the door; which was presently opened by a good-natured looking woman, who asked them what they wanted, Hop-o'-my-Thumb told her that they were poor children who had lost themselves in the forest; and begged that she would take pity on them, and give them a night's lodging. The good woman, seeing how pretty they all were, could not forbear crying; and said to them: "Alas! my poor children, you do not know where you are come; this is the residence of an Ogre who eats up little children."--"Alas! madam," answered Hop-o'-my-Thumb, who, like his brothers, was trembling from head to foot; "what shall we do? If you do not give us a night's lodging, it is quite certain that the wolves in the forest will not fail to devour us; and sooner than that, we would prefer to be eaten by the gentleman of the house; for, perhaps he may take pity on us, and spare our lives, if you join your entreaties to ours." The Ogre's wife, who thought that she might be able to conceal them, until the next day, from her husband, let them in; and told them to warm themselves near a good fire: you may guess that it was a large one, for a whole sheep was roasting before it for the Ogre's supper. As they were beginning to get warm, they heard three or four very loud knocks at the door: this was the Ogre. The good woman, his wife, then concealed them under the bed; and went to open the door for her husband. The Ogre asked if his supper were ready, and his wine drawn; and immediately seated himself at the table. The sheep was served up, although still half raw; but he seemed to like it all the better. He then snuffed up to his right and left; saying that he smelt fresh meat. "It must be the calf, which I have recently killed, that you smell," said his wife. "I tell you, once more, that I smell fresh meat," replied the Ogre, looking suspiciously at his wife; "and there is something going on that I do not know of." With that, he rose from the table and went straight to the bed. "Ah!" said he, "wretched woman, is this the way you think to deceive me! It would serve you right, were I to eat you, yourself; it is well for you that you are old and tough. However, here is some game that comes, very opportunely, to regale three Ogres of my acquaintance; whom I expect about this time." He then drew them one by one, from under the bed. *The poor children all fell on their knees and supplicated him to pardon them;* but they were in the power of one of the most cruel of Ogres, who so far from feeling pity, was already devouring them with his eyes; and who said to his wife they would be delicious eating with a good rich sauce. He then fetched a large knife; and, going to where the poor children were, he sharpened it on a whet-stone



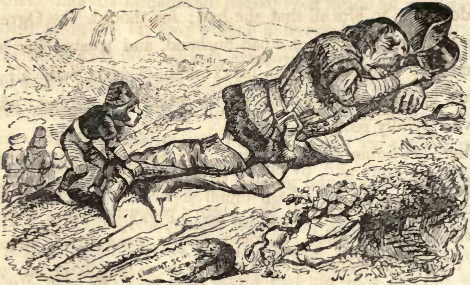
that he held in his left hand. He had already taken one of them in his grasp, when his wife said: "What in the world makes you in such a hurry to kill them to night? Will there not be plenty of time to slaughter them to-morrow?"—"Silence!" answered the Ogre, "they will become more tender, by being kept a short time after they are killed."—"But you have plenty of meat in the house," replied his wife; "there is a calf, two sheep, and half a pig." "That's true," said the Ogre; "give them a good supper then, that they may not get thin, and put them to bed." The good woman was transported with joy, and fetched them a good supper; but they had not much appetite, for they were dreadfully frightened. As for the Ogre, he sat down to his bottle, ravished with the thoughts of the dainty repast that he should give his three friends. He drank more wine, by a dozen glasses, than usual; which made him rather tipsy, and obliged him to go to bed as soon as he rose from table.

The Ogre had seven daughters, who were all quite children. These little Ogresses had very fair skins, for they were fed on raw meat like their father: but they had small grey eyes, quite round crooked noses; and large mouths, with long sharp teeth which stood a great way apart from each other. They were as yet almost too young to do much mischief, but they were in a fair way of becoming as voracious as their father; for they already bit little children and sucked their blood. The Ogresses had been put to bed early that night; and the *whole seven slept together in a large bed, each of them having a golden crown on her head*. There was in the same room another bed of an equal size: in that bed the Ogress put Hop-o'-my-Thumb and his six brothers; after which she went to bed herself with her husband. Hop-o'-my-Thumb, who had remarked that the Ogre's daughters had



crowns of gold on their heads, and who was fearful that the Ogre would repent not having cut their throats in the evening, arose about midnight; and taking off all his brothers' nightcaps and his own, he very gently placed them on the heads of the Ogre's seven daughters, having first removed their golden crowns, and put them on his own and his brothers' heads: so that the Ogre might mistake the seven boys for his seven daughters; and his daughters for the boys, whose throats he wished to cut. The event answered his expectations; for the Ogre, awaking about midnight, regretted that he had deferred until the next day, what he might so easily have done over night: so, half drunk, he hastily jumped out of bed, and taking his large knife: "Come," said he, "let me see what the little villains are about; I'll not make two jobs of it." He then crept softly up stairs to his daughter's bed-room, and groped his way to the bed in which the little boys were all fast asleep, excepting Hop-o'-my-Thumb; who was terribly frightened when he felt the Ogre touching his head with his hand, after having passed it over those of his brothers. When the Ogre felt the crowns of gold: "Truly," said he, "I was about to commit a pretty mistake; I perceive that I drank too much last night." He then went to his daughters' bed; and when he felt the boys' night-caps, he said: "So, so, here you are my boys; let me go to work bravely." With these words, he unhesitatingly cut the throats of all his seven daughters. Satisfied with what he had done, he returned to bed to his wife. As soon as Hop-o'-my-Thumb heard the Ogre begin to snore, he awakened his brothers; and told them to make haste and put on their clothes, and follow him. They descended very quietly into the garden, and then got over the wall into the road. They ran, as fast as they could, nearly all night; trembling with terror, and not knowing which way they were going.

When the Ogre awakened in the morning, he said to his wife: "Go up stairs and dress those seven little rogues that I saw last night." The Ogress was not a little surprised to hear her husband speak so kindly of them; little thinking of the way in which he really meant her to dress them, her only idea being that he wanted her to put on their clothes. She accordingly went up stairs, and was horror-stricken to see her seven daughters lying weltering in their blood, with their throats cut. She immediately fainted away; as would have been the case with most women, similarly circumstanced. The Ogre, who thought that his wife was very long doing what he desired her, went up stairs to assist her; and was, as may be supposed, dreadfully astonished at the frightful spectacle that presented itself. "Ah! what have I done?" cried he; "but the little scoundrels shall suffer for it, and that very soon." He then threw a jug full of water over his wife's face, and when she came to herself: "Make haste, and fetch me my seven-league boots," said he to her, "that I may go and catch the little rascals." The Ogre, having put on the boots, sallied forth; and, after he had strided over many parts of the country, he presently turned into the very road in which the seven poor children were pursuing their journey towards their parents' house; at which they had arrived within a hundred yards. They saw the Ogre stalking from mountain to mountain, and crossing wide rivers as easily as he might have passed the smallest stream. Hop-o'-my-Thumb who observed a hollow rock at no great distance from them, hid his six brothers therein, and then crept into it himself, narrowly watching the Ogre's movements. The Ogre, being very tired with his long and useless journey (for seven-league boots are very tiresome to wear), felt inclined to repose himself a while; and, by chance, stretched himself on the very rock under which the seven children were concealed. As he was quite exhausted, he fell fast asleep; and, after he had lain there a short time, began to snore so terribly loud, that the poor children were not less afraid than they had been when he held his large knife in his hand, and was about to cut their throats. The least terrified of them was Hop-o'-my-Thumb; who desired his brothers to make haste home immediately, while the Ogre was fast asleep, and not to trouble themselves about him. When they had gone, *Hop-o'-my-Thumb crept very quietly up to the Ogre, gently drew off his boots,* and put them on his own legs. The seven-league boots were very large and long; but as they were fairy-boots, they had the quality of adapting themselves to the legs of the person who wore them, large or small: and, accordingly, they fitted him as correctly as though they had been made for him. He went straight to the Ogre's house, where he found the good woman who was weeping over the bodies of her daughters.


LAURENT SC.
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"Your husband," said Hop-o-my-Thumb to her, "is in great danger; for he has been taken prisoner by a band of robbers, who have sworn to kill him, if he does not deliver up to them all his gold and silver. Just as they had put the knife to his throat, with the intention of executing their threat, he perceived me. He begged me to go and advise you of what had befallen him, and desire you to give me all his wealth; without retaining the smallest portion, for in that case they will put him to death without mercy. As it was a matter of great moment, he permitted me to make use of his seven-league boots, which you see I have on; both for the sake of making great haste, and of making it apparent to you that I am not an impostor." The Ogre's wife, dreadfully terrified, immediately handed over to him all that she had; for though the Ogre ate little children, he was not a bad husband, and trusted her with his money. Then Hop-o'-my-Thumb, loaded with all the Ogre's wealth, returned home to his father and mother, where he was joyfully received.

There are some people who will not admit the truth of this latter circumstance, and pretend that Hop-o'-my-Thumb never committed this robbery of the Ogre's property; that in truth he was so honest, that he could hardly make up his mind to take the seven-league boots, because the Ogre had only used them to chase little children. The said people assert that they have their information from a very good quarter, and have eaten and drunk in the wood-cutter's house. They go on to state that when Hop-o'-my-Thumb had put on the Ogre's boots, he proceeded to court, where he knew there was great anxiety felt for an army which was six-hundred miles from the capital, and also for the issue of a battle which had been lately fought; that he went straight to the king, and told him, that if he wished it, he would bring him news of his army before night-fall; that the king promised him a large sum of money if he should succeed in so doing; that Hop-o'-my-Thumb returned with the desired information that same evening; and that this beginning having made him known, he afterwards earned as much as he liked: for that the king paid him very handsomely for carrying despatches between him and his army. They go on to say that, after having pursued for some time the business of a courier, and amassed a large fortune by his exertions, he returned to his family, whose joy it is impossible to imagine at seeing him once again; and that, finally, having purchased official situations for his father and brothers, thus settling them all in easy circumstances, and paying his court to the king perfectly well at the same time, he ultimately married the daughter of a nobleman, and lived happily with her all the rest of his life.

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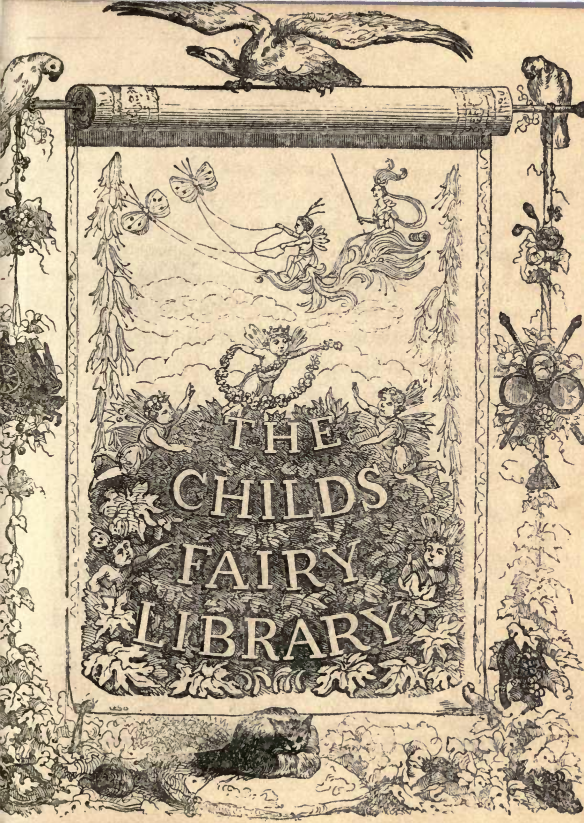
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TO THE
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THESE VOLUMES
ARE
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

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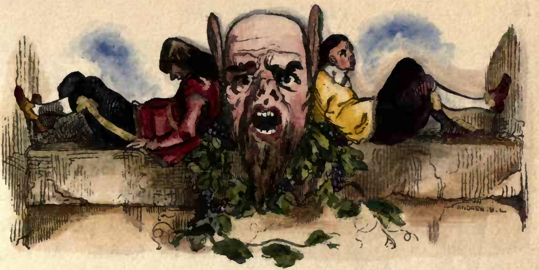
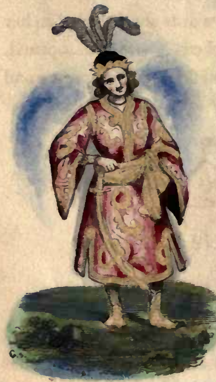


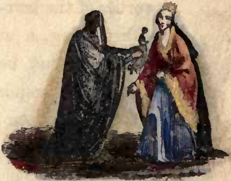
PRINCESS MINIKIN.

ONCE upon a time there was a king and a queen who had only one son, in whom they centred all their hopes. He was fourteen years old, at the time from which this history commences, and the queen had given up all hopes of having any more children. The prince was handsome to admiration, and learned with facility all that was taught him. The king and queen doated on him, and their subjects made him the object of their tenderest affection; for, though he knew very well what distinction was necessary to observe towards the several persons who approached him, he was affable to all; *he was called Zirphil.* As he was their only son, the king and queen resolved that he should marry young; that they might hope to see princes, his

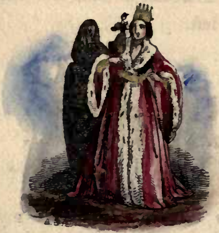


sons, worthy of wearing their crown, if unfortunately Zirphil should be taken from them.

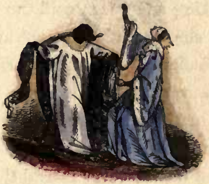
Search was accordingly made, on foot and on horse back, for a princess worthy of the heir-apparent: but notwithstanding, a suitable partner for him could not be found. At last, after many enquiries had thus been made, the queen was informed that a lady very closely veiled, requested a personal and private interview with her majesty, in order to confer with her on a very important affair. The queen hastened to her throne to receive her, and gave orders for her to be ushered into her presence. The lady on being admitted, walked up to the queen without removing her large white veil, which reached from her head to her feet and entirely concealed every part of her person. When she had arrived at the foot of her throne: "I am astonished, O queen!" said she, "that you have even dreamed of marrying your son without consulting me; I am the fairy Marmotta, and my name is too well known for you not to have heard of me. I am mortally offended, and, as a commencement of your punishment, I command you to marry your son Zirphil to a person whom I have brought hither for that especial purpose." With these words she fumbled in her pocket and pulled out a small tooth-pickcase; this she opened, when there issued from it a little enamelled doll, so pretty and so nicely made that *the queen, in spite of her grief, could not forbear admiring its beauty.* "This is my god-daughter,' continued the fairy, "and I have destined Zirphil, from his birth, to be her husband." The queen burst into tears, and conjured Marmotta, by the most tender entreaties, not to expose her to the laughter of her subjects, who would ridicule her indeed if she were to announce to them such a marriage. "What do you mean by ridicule, madam?" said the fairy. "Ah! we shall see whether they have any occasion to ridicule my god-daughter, and whether your son ought not to adore her. I assure you that she is worthy of him in every respect; that she is small, is true, but she has more wit than all the people in your kingdom put together; and when you



hear her, you will be surprised yourself; for you must know that she can talk, and to some purpose. Come, little princess *Minikin*," said she to the doll, "talk a little to your mother-in-law, and show her what you can do." *Then the pretty Minikin skipped on to the queen's tippet*, and complimented her in so tender and intelligent a manner, that the queen suspended her tears, and affectionately kissed the little princess. "Here, your majesty," said the fairy, "is my tooth pick case; you can replace your daughter-in-law therein, I wish your son to accustom himself to her society before he marries her; however, I do not think it will require a very long time. Your obedience may soften my anger; but if you disobey my orders, you, your husband, your son and your kingdom, shall all feel the effects of my resentment; and above all, do not fail to replace her very early every evening in the case, for it is of great importance that she does not sit up



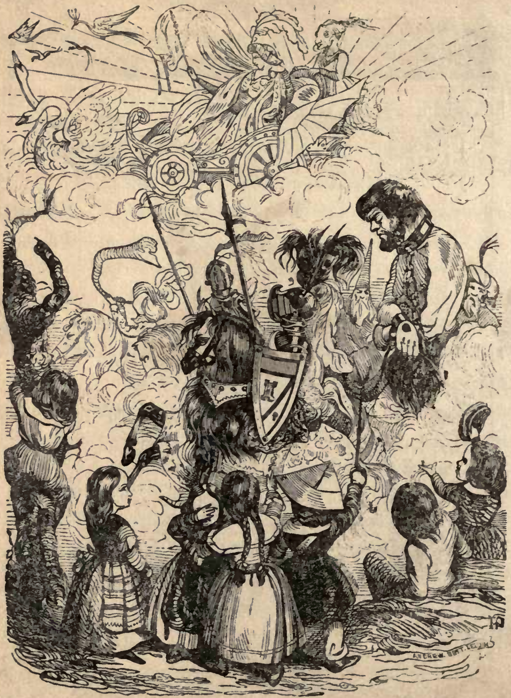
late." With these words the fairy lifted up her veil, and *the queen fainted away with terror* on perceiving a real living marmot, covered with black hair, and having a head as large as an ordinary woman. Her attendants came to her assistance, and when she recovered from her swoon, she only saw the case which Marmòtta had left.



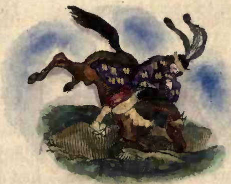
She was conveyed to bed, and the king was informed of her indisposition ; he hastened to her apartment in violent agitation. The queen desired all her attendants to quit the room, and, with a torrent of tears, related what had transpired, to his majesty, who would not believe a word she said until he saw her draw forth the doll from her little case. "Good Heaven!" cried he, after meditating a few moments,—"is it possible that kings are liable to such severe misfortunes! Alas! we are only placed higher than other men to feel more acutely the sorrow and misfortunes inseparable from this life."—"And to show greater examples of fortitude, Sire," interposed the doll, in a soft and clear voice. "My dear Minikin" said the queen, "you talk like an oracle." Finally, after an hour's conversation between these three personages, it was agreed that nothing should as yet be said about the marriage, and that they were to wait until Zirphil, who was then absent for three days on a hunting expedition, should determine to obey the fairy's orders, which the queen undertook to make known to him.

Meanwhile, the king and queen paid the utmost attention to the little Minikin: she had a highly accomplished mind, she spoke exceedingly well and with a peculiarly lively turn, which was engaging; however, notwithstanding her animation, her eyes had a certain motionless stare, which was not agreeable, and which the queen only overlooked as she began to love the little princess. She was however fearful that the prince might conceive an aversion to her on this account. More than a month had passed after Marmotta's visit and the queen had not yet dared to introduce Zirphil to his proposed bride, when one morning that prince entered her apartment before she had risen, and, seating himself by her bed side, spoke as follows: "A few days ago, Madam, while I was hunting, the most surprising adventure conceivable befell me, which I would fain have concealed from you; but the secret has become so burthensome to me, that I feel I can withhold it from you no longer.

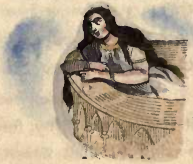
"It is now some days since, that as I was eagerly following a wild boar, I became so absorbed in its pursuit, as not to



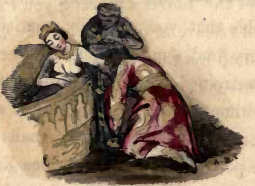
observe that I had outstripped all my attendants; when, as I arrived at the outskirts of the forest, I all at once saw the animal precipitate himself into a large opening in the ground, into which *my horse plunged after him*. I felt myself descending into the earth for about half an hour, when my horse's hoofs came suddenly in contact with the floor. Looking about me,



I saw, instead of the wild boar, which I confess I was somewhat fearful of meeting, a very ugly woman, who begged me to alight from my horse and follow her. I did not hesitate, and giving her my hand, she opened a little door which I had not before perceived, and I entered with her into a green marble saloon, in the middle of which stood a large golden tub covered by a piece of rich cloth. This she raised, and I saw in the tub a lady of such surpassing loveliness that I could with difficulty preserve myself from falling backwards with surprise. 'Prince Zirphil' said the lady, who appeared to be bathing, 'the fairy Marmotta has enchanted me here, and it is by your aid alone that I can be freed.'—'Speak, Madam,' said I, 'inform me how I can serve you.'—'You must,' replied the lady, 'either pledge yourself to marry me immediately, or scale me alive.' My surprise at the first proposition could only be equalled by my horror at the alternative. She observed my embarrassment, and continued: 'Do not imagine that I am ridiculing you, or that I am making a proposal of which you will have any reason to repent accepting. No, Zirphil, do not be alarmed; but I am an unfortunate princess for whom the fairy has conceived a violent hatred, and whom she has metamorphosed into a creature half woman, half whale, because I refused to marry her nephew, the King of the Whitings, a young man the ugliness of whose person is only equalled by the wickedness of his actions: the fairy has condemned me to remain in the state in which you now see me, until a prince named Zirphil, shall have fulfilled one of the conditions I have just proposed to you. To bring this about, I caused my lady of honour to take the shape of a wild boar this morning, in order to attract you hither; you know how my design has succeeded. But I must now inform you, that you will not be allowed to quit this place, until you have complied with either one or the other of my requests; this I cannot avoid, and Citronetta, whom you have already seen, will confirm to you the truth of my words.' Conceive, madam," said prince Zirphil to the queen, who was listening with the greatest attention, "into what a state this speech threw me. Although I thought that the princess was very beautiful, and although her beauty and misfortunes made her extremely interesting, the idea of a whale princess inspired me with horror: on the other hand, the thought of scaling her alive made me frantic. 'But, madam,' said I at length, (for the silence into which her discourse had thrown me was becoming as insupportable as it was unmannerly), 'is there no third means of accomplishing what you desire?' I had no sooner pronounced these unlucky words, than the princess and her attendant began to utter such piercing shrieks and lamentations, as almost rent the roof of the saloon. 'Ingrate! barbarian! tiger! every thing that is most ferocious and inhuman!' said she, 'you would then add to my punishment the horror of seeing you expire? For know that if you do not resolve at once to comply with my request, the fairy has assured me that you will perish; and that I shall remain in my present condition all my life.'

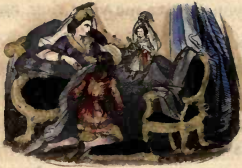


"Her reproaches pierced my heart; *she drew her beautiful arms from the water, and clasped her lily-white hands* to entreat me to decide quickly. Citronetta threw herself at my feet and embraced my knees, almost deafening me with her clamorous grief.—'But how can I marry you?' said I, 'how can the ceremony be performed, in the first place?'—'Scale me,' said she tenderly, 'and do not marry me at all, I shall be quite as well pleased.'—'Scale her,' said the attendant, redoubling her entreaties, 'and trouble yourself no farther.' I was in an inexpressible perplexity; and when I attempted to reflect how to act, their cries and tears only increased my confusion. At last, after a thousand conflicting thoughts, I looked again on the beautiful whale-princess, and her beauty triumphed. *I kneeled near the tub and taking her fair hand*: 'No, adorable princess,' I exclaimed, 'I will not scale you; *I prefer to marry you.*'

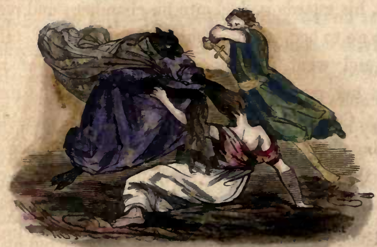


"The princess's joy at hearing these words was visible on her countenance; but it was a modest joy, for she blushed, and with downcast eyes she said; 'I shall never forget the service you are about to do me; I am so penetrated with gratitude to you, that you cannot ask me for anything that I will not grant you in return.'— 'Come, lose no time,' cried the impatient Citronetta, 'but inform prince Zirphil what remains for him to do.'—'It is only necessary,' said the whale-princess, blushing again, 'for you to give me your ring and to receive mine; here is my hand, receive it as a pledge of my faith.' No sooner had I made this tender exchange and kissed her fair hand, than I found myself on my horse, in the middle of the forest; when I was soon rejoined by my attendants, and I returned to the palace mute with astonishment. Every evening, since this took place, I have been transported, without knowing by what means, into the handsome green marble saloon, where I pass the night in company with an invisible person; who says she is my bride, and who converses with me on the subject of our union: but—"—"Ah! my son," interrupted the queen, "and is it possible that you are really married!"—"Yes! but although I am very fond of my wife madam," resumed the prince, "I would have restrained my passion for her, if I could have disenchanted her without either marrying her or scaling her alive." As Zirphil pronounced these words, a small voice was heard from the queen's pocket; saying: "Prince Zirphil, you should have scaled her; and your pity will perhaps be fatal to you."

On hearing this voice, the prince was quite speechless with astonishment. In vain the queen attempted to conceal the speaker from him; he immediately fumbled in the pocket, which was laying on an arm-chair which stood near the bed, and drew forth the case; which the queen took from his hand and opened. Princess Minikin then stepped from it; *and the prince, in surprise, kneeling down by the queen's bed-side to look at her more closely,* exclaimed: "Would you believe, madam; that this is the miniature counterpart of my beloved whale-princess!" The queen then informed her son of all that had passed on the fairy Marmotta's visit, at which Zirphil could not forbear showing a surprise not very flattering to Minikin; but she was so good-natured, that when she saw the queen's affliction, she kissed her hand and could not refrain from tears. Zirphil was touched by this tender scene, and asked Minikin for her hand, to kiss in its turn: with much grace and dignity, she extended it to him; and then re-entered her case. When Zirphil had left the queen, she rose from her bed to inform the king of what she had heard, and of what she had just witnessed; that they might take every reasonable precaution against the probable effect of the fairy's anger.



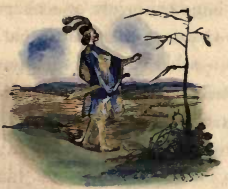
The following night, prince Zirphil, notwithstanding that his body-guard had been doubled, was carried off as the clock struck twelve, and found himself, as usual, in company with his invisible princess; but instead of being greeted with kind and tender language, as heretofore, he heard weeping and sounds of grief; and observed that the princess kept at a considerable distance from him. He ran after her round the apartment until he was tired; when seating himself on a sofa he exclaimed: "What have I been guilty of, that I deserve such unkind treatment?"—"I know all," said the whale-princess, in a voice choked by sobs. "Ingrate! have you forgotten the tenderness with which you kissed the hand of the princess Minikin?"—"The tenderness;" returned Zirphil quickly: "ah! divine princess, are you so little acquainted with mine as to accuse me on so slight a ground? If I looked at Minikin attentively, it was only because her face exactly resembles yours; and, being deprived of the pleasure of seeing you, because all that resembles you fills me with delight. Conceal yourself no longer, my dear princess, and be sure that I will look at none but you." The invisible princess seemed to be consoled by those words; and drawing near the prince: "Forgive me," said she, "this little jealous suspicion; I have reasons enough to dread being separated from you, to be afflicted at any thing that seems to forebode that misfortune."—"But," said Zirphil, "can you not inform me, why you are not permitted to make yourself visible to me? For, if I have delivered you from Marmotta's tyranny, how is it that you are still under enchantment?"—"Alas!" said the invisible princess, "if you had chosen to scale me, we should have been much happier; but you felt so much horror at that proposition, that I dared not press you more."—"By what means," interrupted Zirphil, "is Minikin acquainted with what has happened? for she said nearly the same thing to me." No sooner had he pronounced these words, than the whale-princess uttered a piercing shriek and sprang off the sofa; and the prince, in astonishment did so too. But what was his terror when he perceived the hideous Marmotta, in the middle of the apartment, holding his beautiful princess by her flowing ringlets; no longer invisible, no longer half a whale. *He drew his sword;* but his princess, with tears



and supplications, entreated him to moderate his anger, as it would be of no avail against the fairy's power; and the horrible Marmotta gnashing her teeth, there issued from her mouth a violet-coloured flame, which singed his whiskers. "Prince Zirphil," said the fairy to him, "a fairy who guards you, prevents me from exterminating you, your father, your mother and all who are related to you; but you shall at least suffer in what is most dear to you, for marrying without having consulted me; and your torments, and those of your princess, shall not cease until you are submitted to my power."

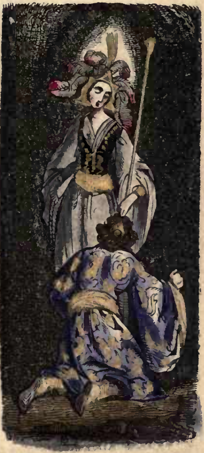
As she finished these words, the fairy disappeared, together with the princess, the apartment and the palace; and prince Zirphil found himself in his own room, in his night dress, and with his drawn sword in his hand. He was so astonished and so beside himself with anger, that he did not observe that it was freezing; for it was then the middle of winter. On hearing his outcries, his guards rushed into his chamber; and requested him either to go to bed, or allow himself to be dressed. He chose the latter, and went straight to the apartment of the queen; who, on her part, had passed the night in the most dreadful anxiety. On going to bed, the queen was unable to sleep; nd being troubled with sorrowful thoughts, she resolved to impart them to the little Minikin. With that purpose she took the case; but in vain she shook it, Minikin was no longer there. The queen, fearful that she had lost her in the garden, rose from her bed and gave orders for torches to be lighted and a search to be made immediately: but in vain they searched; Minikin had vanished; and the queen returned to her bed in a transport of; grief with which she was overwhelmed when her son entered her apartment. He was himself in such affliction that he did not perceive that his mother was in tears. The queen, therefore, when she noticed his agitation, said: "Ah! doubtless you are come to announce some terrible calamity?"—"Yes, madam," answered Zirphil, "I am come to inform you that I wish to live no longer if I do not find my dear princess."—"How, my son!" said the queen, "are you already in love with that unfortunate princess?"—"What! with your Minikin?" said the prince, "is it possible that you can even suspect me? Alas! my dear whale-princess has been torn from me; for her only I wish to live; and Marmotta, the cruel Marmotta, has dragged her from me!"—"Ah! my son," said the queen, "I am still more afflicted than you are; for if you are deprived of your whale-princess, I have to regret the loss of my Minikin, who since last evening, has disappeared from the case." Then the queen and Zirphil related to each other the misfortunes that had befallen them. The king was promptly informed of the queen's despair and outcries, as also of his son's sorrow. He entered the apartment in the midst of the scene we have described, and informed himself of what had occurred. As he was very sagacious, the thought immediately struck him to have Minikin advertised; and to offer a large reward to whoever should bring her to the palace. Every body thought this an admirable expedient; and the queen herself, notwithstanding her sorrow, was obliged to agree that no one but the most transcendant genius could have hit upon so singularly felicitous a scheme. Accordingly, hand-bills were printed and distributed; advertisements were inserted in "The Times" newspaper; and the queen consoled herself with the hope of soon receiving intelligence of her little princess. As for Zirphil, the loss of Minikin interested him as little as her presence. He came to the resolution of seeking out a certain fairy of whom he had heard; and having obtained permission of the king and queen, he set out immediately, attended only by his equerry.

The country in which the fairy lived was situated at an immense distance from that of the prince; but neither time nor obstacles could stop the amorous impatience of the young Zirphil. He passed through kingdoms and countries out of number. Nothing particular occurred to him, because he was determined that nothing should; for, beautiful as Cupid, and brave as a lion, adventures would have befallen him if he had been willing to seek them. At last, after he had been a year on his travel, he arrived at the borders of the desert in which the fairy resided; he alighted from his horse, and left his equerry to await his return in a little hut, with orders not to be impatient for his coming. *He entered on the desert, which was indeed frightfully solitary:* it was inhabited only by owls,

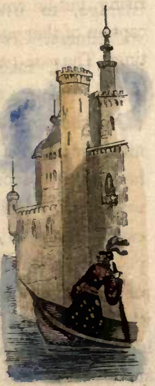


but their dismal screechings did not dismay the soul of our courageous prince. Sustained by his unconquerable intrepidity, and by the hope of meeting with the beneficent fairy, he did not hesitate an instant, but penetrated into that region which until then had never been trodden by mortal feet.

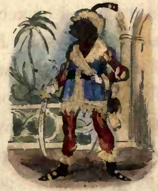
After night had set in, he perceived afar off a light; which made him think that he was approaching the fairy's grotto: for no one but a fairy could reside in that horrible desert. He continued to direct his steps towards it during the whole of the night; and at last, about day-break, he discovered the celebrated grotto. He arrived at the foot of a prodigiously high rock, which seemed to be of fire; such was its brilliancy: it was a carbuncle of such an immense size, that the fairy had a very spacious residence therein. When prince Zirphil had reached her grotto, the fairy Effulgent appeared to him: *he prostrated himself before her,* when she desired him to rise and follow her into the grotto. "Prince," said she to Zirphil, "a power equal to mine has partly counteracted the happiness with which I endowed you at your birth; but you may expect everything from my protection: you must have as much patience as courage, to overcome Marmotta's wickedness. I can tell you no more." "At least, madam," answered the prince, "do me the favour to inform me if the beautiful whale-princess is unhappy; and if I may hope to see her again soon."—"She is not unhappy," said Effulgent, "but you cannot hope to see her again until you have pounded her in the mortar of the King of the Whitings."—"Oh Heavens!" cried Zirphil; "is it possible, madam, that she is in his power? alas! Then I have to dread the effects of his passion for her, in addition to the horror I feel at having to pound her with my own hands!"—"Arm yourself with courage," answered the



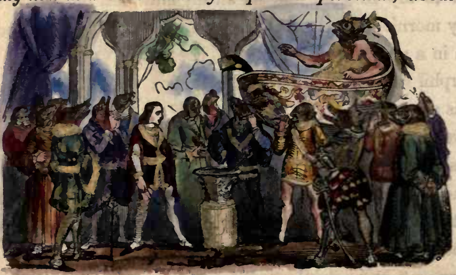
fairy, "and do not hesitate to obey me: on that all your happiness will depend, as also that of your wife."—"But she will die if I pound her," continued the prince, "and I would sooner suffer death myself——"—"Go, said the fairy, "and make no reply: every moment that you lose, adds to Marmotta's fury. Hasten to the King of the Whitings; tell him that you are the page promised him by me; and rely on my protection." Then, Effulgent pointed out to him, on a map, his road to the court of the King of the Whitings; and dismissed him, after apprising him that the ring he had received from his whale-princess, would instruct him how to act when the king gave him anything difficult to perform. He set out; and, afterjourneying several days, arrived at a meadow close to the sea-side; where there was moored a little sailing-boat, built of mother-of-pearl and ornamented with gold. He looked at his ruby-ring, and saw his shadow sitting in the boat; so he jumped on board; and having unmoored it, the wind drove it out to sea: he was soon out of sight of land, and after being driven before the wind for several hours, *the boat stopped at the foot of a crystal castle*, built on piles.



He sprang on the landing place, and entered a court which led to a superb vestibule and to a numerous suite of apartments; all the walls of which, were of rock-crystal, admirably engraved, presenting the most charming effect imaginable. —This castle was the palace of the King of the Whitings; and its only inhabitants were men with fishes' heads. The prince had no doubt as to where he was: he felt his choler rising, but he controlled it to ask of a turbot, who looked like a captain of the guard, where he could find the King of the Whitings. The *man-turbot* gravely motioned him onwards, and Zirphil passed into the guard-room, where he saw a thousand men, with pikes' heads, under arms, who fell into a double rank for him to pass through: at last, after making his way through an infinite crowd of men-fish, he came to the presence chamber. He did not hear much noise in his progress, for the men-fish were dumb; while he observed that the greater part of them had heads like the whitings'. The prince saw, in the



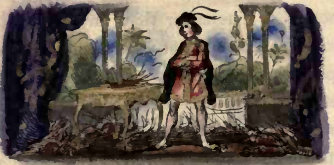
ante-room, several who appeared to be of high rank; from the crowds which surrounded them, and from their own important looks. Zirphil had reached the king's closet, just as the council, which was composed of twelve men with sharks' heads, was leaving his majesty. Presently, the king himself appeared: he had, like so many of his court, the head of a whiting; but he had also fins on his shoulders; and from the waist downwards was a real whiting. He had the gift of speech; and his only garment was a scarf of golden-fish-skin, which looked very splendid. On his head he wore a helmet shaped like a crown, whence depended the tail of a cod-fish; which served him instead of a plume of feathers. *Four men-whitings were carrying him in a bowl made of Japannese porcelain,* about the



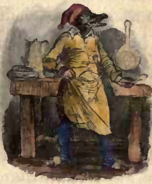
size of a bathing-tub; and which was filled with sea-water. One of the greatest ceremonials at the court, and which was scrupulously exacted by the king, was the refilling of this bowl, twice a day, by the peers and dukes, his attendants. This employment was, however, considered a great honour; and was much sought after. The King of the Whitings was very tall; and looked more like a monster than any thing else. After replying to some of those about him who had brought him petitions, he perceived the prince. "Who are you my friend?" said his majesty. "What accident has brought a man here?" "May it please your majesty," answered Zirphil, "I am the page whom the fairy Effulgent promised to send you."—— "Oh! I understand," said the king laughing, and shewing his teeth, which looked like those of a saw; "let him be taken to my seraglio and let all my craw-fish be shewn him. Every morning he must choose ten from among them, pound them in a mortar, and make me some broth."

Zirphil was conducted to the seraglio; and while reflecting on his singular situation, he saw the doors open and ten or twelve thousand craw-fish enter the room; and arrange themselves in straight lines; nearly filling the apartment.

The thought struck him that he might be able to discover his beautiful and unfortunate whale-princess among them; as the hideous Marmotta had ordained that he should pound her in a mortar. "Why should I have to pound them," said he "except it is to drive me mad? But never mind: let me try to discover her," cried Zirphil; "that I may at least die of grief before her face." Then he asked the craw-fish if they would allow him to search among them for one with whom he was acquainted. *She who appeared to be the chief, mounted on a table* and said: "We are not aware that there is such an one among us, Sir, but you may search until it is time for us to return to our pond; where it is absolutely requisite that we should pass the night." Zirphil commenced his researches; but it was like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay; and he only learned, from those he interrogated, that they were all princesses who had been transformed by the wicked Marmotta. He was inexpressibly grieved, on hearing this; and to think that he would have to choose ten of them every day for the king's broth. It was now getting late, and they informed Zirphil that it was time for them to return to their pond, but it was not without pain, that the prince could consent to forego the pleasure of searching, however fruitlessly, for his dear princess. He had not been able, during the whole day, to speak to more than one hundred and fifty; but as he was at least certain that she was



not among those, he resolved to take ten from their number: he did so; and having taken them to *a man-pike, who was the head-cook,* the latter inspected them, and brought Zirphil a green



porphyry mortar and a golden pestle; and, having shown the prince how to place them, made signs for him to begin pounding. He was about to do so, when the bottom of the mortar opened, amid shouts of laughter, and sent forth a bright flame which dazzled the prince's eyes for a moment, and then expired; leaving the bottom of the mortar as before. Zirphil looked into it, but nothing was there; the craw-fish had disappeared; at which he was very much astonished, but withal pleased: for he did not relish the idea of having to pound them. The man-pike seemed to regret what had taken place, and wept bitterly.

The prince was as much surprised at seeing the head-cook's grief, as at the laughter of the craw-fish; but he could not learn what occasioned either; as the craw-fish were gone and the man-pike could not speak.

Prince Zirphil, pondering on what he had witnessed, returned to his pretty apartment, where he no longer saw the craw-fish; they having returned to their pond. The next morning, when the craw-fish entered, he again sought for his princess; and not finding her, he chose ten of the finest of them, and took them to the kitchen. The same adventure occurred as before: the flame came from the mortar; the craw-fish disappeared laughing; and the man-pike wept. A similar occurrence happened every day for three months; but as Zirphil heard no more of the King of the Whitings, his only sorrow was that he could not find his beautiful whale-princess.

One evening, as Zirphil was returning from the kitchen to his room, he had occasion to pass through the palace gardens: as he passed near the palisade which surrounded a charming grove, in the middle of which was an artificial cascade, he heard the sound of voices; which not a little surprised him: for he thought all the inhabitants of that country were dumb, like those he had seen. He walked more softly, and heard a voice say: "But, my princess, so surely as you never discover yourself, so surely your husband will never recognize you."—

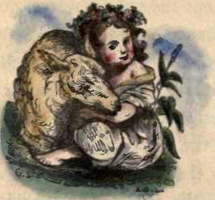
What would you have me do?" said the other voice, which Zirphil immediately recognized as one which he had so often heard; "the tyranny of Marmotta obliges me to act as I do; and I cannot discover myself without endangering my life and his. The wise fairy, Effulgent, who sent him here, conceals me from him, for the purpose of preserving us for each other: it is absolutely necessary that he should pound me; it is an irrevocable decree."—"Whence comes it, that the prince must pound you?" said the other; "you have never consented to relate your history to me; though the unfortunate Citronetta, your confidante, would have informed me of it, if she had not been selected, last week, for the king's broth."—"Alas!" replied the whale-princess, "that unfortunate creature has then already undergone the fate which awaits me. Would that I were in her place! surely she is now in Effulgent's grotto." "Do," said the other voice, "since it is so fine an evening, inform me why you are submitted to Marmotta's vengeance? I have already told you who I am; and I repeat that I am burning with impatience to learn your history."—"Well, said the princess, although it will only renew my grief, I cannot refuse to satisfy you; besides I shall have to speak of Zirphil; and I abandon myself with joy to all that can recall his image to my mind."

It is easy to imagine the prince's joy at overhearing this tender confession: he softly glided into the grove; and, as it was now quite dark, he could neither see nor be seen: he listened, however, with the utmost attention, and overheard as follows.

"My father was king of a certain country situated near mount Caucasus; he governed, as well as he could, a people of incredible wickedness: insurrections were perpetually shaking his throne; and the windows of his palace were frequently shattered to pieces, by stones intended for himself. The queen, my mother, who was very clever and highly accomplished, composed for him harangues to appease the rioters; but if he were successful one day, on the next there was infallibly another insurrection. The judges were tired of condemning to death; and the executioners of hanging and beheading the criminals: at last things arrived at such a crisis; that, seeing all his provinces in rebellion, and his people in arms against him, my father resolved to retire into the country; that he might no longer witness the dreadful condition of his affairs. He took his queen with him; and left the kingdom to be governed by one of his ministers: a man wiser and of a bolder spirit than the king, my father. At this time, my mother expected to give birth to me every day; and could with difficulty reach the foot of mount Caucasus, where my father had determined to fix his residence. Our wicked subjects lighted bonfires at their departure; and the next day strangled the minister, declaring that he wanted to act the king, and that they preferred even their old one to him. My father was not at all flattered by their preference; and did not therefore quit the retirement of his little country-house, where I soon saw the light. I was called Minikin, because I was very small; and as the king and queen, tired of honours that had cost them so dearly, wished to conceal my birth from me, they brought me up as a shepherdess. At the end of ten years, which appeared to my parents no longer than ten minutes, so contented were they with their retreat, the fairies, who inhabited mount Caucasus, indignant at the persevering wickedness of the inhabitants of my father's late kingdom, resolved to restore it to order.

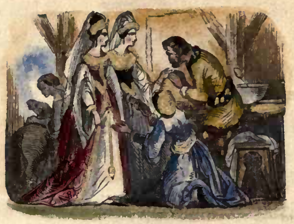
"One day as I was tending my flock in the meadow that joined our garden, two old shepherdesses accosted me, and entreated me to give them a night's lodging: they looked so weary and so sorrowful, that I instantly took compassion on them. 'Come,' said I to them; 'my father, who is a shepherd, will be willing to receive you.' I then ran to our cottage to tell him that they were coming: he went out to meet them, and received them very kindly, as did the queen, my mother. I then collected my sheep, and fetched some new milk for our guests; and, while my father was preparing something nice for supper, the queen, who, as I have already told you, was very intelligent, entertained them with her conversation.

"*I had a little lamb of which I was excessively fond:* my father told me to bring it to him that he might put it down to roast.



I was not in the habit of refusing to do as I was desired, so I fetched my lamb immediately; but I was so afflicted, that I ran to my mother and burst into tears: she was, however, so much engaged in talking to the good women, that she did not observe me. 'What is the matter with the little Minikin?' said one of them seeing me in tears. 'Alas! madam,' said I to her, 'my father is about to roast for you my little pet-lamb.'—'What' said she who had not spoken, 'is it for us that they are going to be so cruel to the pretty Minikin?' Then, rising from her seat, she struck the floor with her wand; and there instantly appeared a table, on which was spread a magnificent feast: at the same time the two old shepherdesses were transformed into two ladies, so handsome and so glittering with jewels, that I was motionless with surprise at seeing them.

"My father and mother immediately began to testify their respect for the two fairies, for you may be sure that fairies they



were. *Raising them from their feet, where the king and queen had thrown themselves:* 'King and queen,' said the more majestic of the two, 'we have known you for a long time; and your misfortunes have excited our pity. Do not think that a high station is exempt from the evils attendant on human life: you ought to know from experience, that the higher the rank, the greater the liability to misfortune: your patience and virtue, however, have lifted you above your hard fate; and it is time they should be rewarded. I am the fairy Effulgent, and I am come to ask you what can most contribute to your happiness: speak, and do not be afraid of putting our power to the test; consult together, and your wishes shall be accomplished. But do not let your request have reference to Minikin: her destiny is apart from yours. The fairy Marmotta, jealous of the brilliant career before your daughter, has condemned her to obscurity for a certain period; but Minikin will be better able to appreciate the happiness of life, after she shall have known some of its evils: we will protect her and mitigate her fate. This is all we are permitted to unfold to you. Now speak: any thing that you can ask, shall be granted.'

"The fairies were silent after this harangue. The queen turned to the king, and requested him to make answer; for she was in tears at learning that I was destined to be unfortunate: but neither was my father in a condition to speak; he uttered lamentable cries, and I, seeing my parents weep, quitted my lamb, to join my tears to theirs.

"The good fairies, affected by the extreme grief which prevailed in the royal family, spoke a few words apart; then Effulgent, who had already spoken, said to the queen: 'Be consoled, madam; the misfortunes with which Minikin is threatened are not so bad, since they will terminate happily: for, from the moment that the husband, we have destined for her, shall have performed what fate shall require of him, Minikin will be happy for the remainder of her life; and our sister will have no further power over either of them: we have allotted her to a prince, who is every way worthy of her. All that remains for us to say is, that it is absolutely necessary you should lower your daughter every morning into the well, and let her bathe there during the space of half an hour. If you scrupulously observe this rule, perhaps your daughter may avoid the misfortune with which she is menaced; and it is at the age of twelve years that her destiny will be fulfilled: if she reach thirteen, without its coming to pass, there will be no longer any thing to fear: so much for Minikin. For yourselves, express but your wishes, and they shall be gratified.'

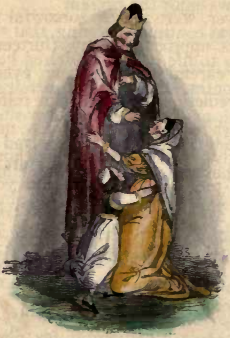
"The king and queen looked at each other, and, after a short silence, the former requested to be changed into a statue until my thirteen probationary years should be accomplished; while the latter confined her wishes to requesting that the temperature of the well in which I was to be bathed, might always be adapted to the season. The fairies, charmed with this excess of tenderness, granted in addition, that the well should be filled with orange-flower-water; and that the king, whenever the queen should throw some of this water over him, should resume his natural form, and be changed into a statue again whenever he should wish. Then the fairies took their leave of us, after having praised the king and queen for their moderation.

"They disappeared; and I felt grief for the first time in my life, at seeing the king, my father, become a large statue of black marble. The queen gave way to tears, and I also: but at last, as every thing has an end, I ceased to cry; and only thought of consoling my mother: for my mind was highly intellectual, and my heart capable of the deepest feelings. The queen passed nearly all her time at the feet of the statue; and I, after being bathed, according to the fairies' instructions, went regularly to milk our sheep: this milk formed our principal food, for the queen was too weak to have an appetite for anything else; indeed it was only her love for me that made her wish to prolong a life, which seemed so unfortunate. 'Alas! my child, my child' would she say to me occasionally, 'of what avail to us has been our high rank (for she no longer concealed from me my birth)? would not a less elevated station have been preferable to a crown attended with such grievous misfortunes? virtue alone, joined to my affection for you, my dear Minikin, enables me to support them; but there are moments when my soul seems anxious to quit my body, and when I confess that I feel a pleasure, in the certainty that I must die.'

"I was regularly bathed every day, and my mother was very much afflicted at seeing the king always remain an inanimate statue: however, she dared not recall him to life, for fear that she should only cause him the grief of witnessing my predicted misfortune. The fairies not having specified in what way my fate was to affect me, we were in a dreadful state of anxiety, and the queen in particular. Her imagination, having a vast field for its exercise, foreboded to her the most frightful misfortunes, and had no bounds to its fears: for my part, I soon ceased to think upon the subject, so true is it, that youth is the only season in which we enjoy the present

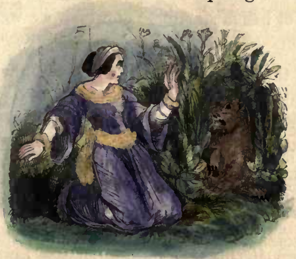
"My mother was continually saying, that she had a great mind to recall the king to life, which I advised her to do. At last, at the end of six months, seeing that the fairies' bath had made me very beautiful, and had improved my understanding, which was maturing from day to day, she resolved to gratify herself; in order, as she said, to give the king the pleasure of seeing me: so she desired me to fetch her some water from the well. Accordingly the next morning, when I had bathed, I brought up with me a jug filled with this miraculous water; and the moment that my mother sprinkled some drops of it on the statue, my father became a man again. The queen threw herself at his feet, to ask his pardon for disturbing his repose. *My father raised her and embracing her tenderly,* peace was concluded: and she presented to him, his daughter.

"The king was delighted with me, and lavished on me a thousand caresses; then, turning to the queen, he asked her if she had any news. 'Alas!' said my mother, 'how should any reach me in this desert?' —'Well then,' said the king, 'you shall hear some from me; for I have not been asleep all this time as you supposed. The fairies, who protect us, have shown me, that my subjects have been terribly punished for their wickedness: my kingdom being transformed into one vast lake,



and the inhabitants into so many men-fish. A nephew of the fairy Marmotta, whom they have placed upon the throne, persecutes them with unceasing cruelty; he eats them up for the slightest offence. At the end of a certain period, the exact duration of which is unknown to me, a prince will come, who shall reign in his stead; and in the kingdom, which will be then re-established, Minikin will enjoy a long life of happiness. That is all, that I have learned, and I have not passed my time very idly; added the king, laughing, 'to have learned so much.'

"We passed some time very happily indeed. The king and queen, however, were rather sorrowful when they remembered that I was approaching my thirteenth year. As the queen was very careful to bathe me every day, she still hoped that the prediction would not be fulfilled; but who can boast of having evaded his destiny? One morning, the queen having risen early, while she was plucking some flowers to adorn our mantel-piece, for the king was very fond of flowers, she saw crawling from under a tuberose-tree *an ugly animal, something like a marmot.* The beast sprang at my mother, and bit her nose; when she fainted away with pain, and the fright caused by so sudden an attack. My father, uneasy at her absence, went to seek her; and you may judge of his horror, at finding his wife weltering in her blood, and nearly dead! He uttered frightful cries, which soon brought me to his assistance;



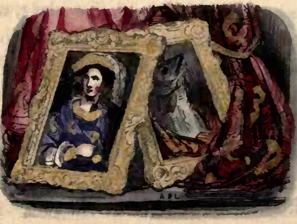
and between us, we bore the queen to our cottage, and laid her on her bed; where she lay insensible for two hours. At last she began to give signs of returning consciousness; and in a few moments we had the extreme pleasure of seeing her perfectly restored, except that the wound she had received was exceedingly painful. Her first question was, whether I had been bathed; but we had been so much engaged attending to her, that I had forgotten my bath. On hearing this, my mother was dreadfully alarmed; but seeing that no accident had as yet befallen me, she soon became tranquil, and related to us the particulars of her misfortune; at which we were very much surprised.

"However, the day passed without any other mischance: the king had taken down his fowling-piece, and made a diligent search after the vile brute, but in vain; he could not find it. The next morning, at day break, the queen arose and took me to the well. She lowered me therein, as usual, but, alas! O fatal and miserable day! at that moment, the sky, although still perfectly serene, echoed with a dreadful thunder; while the day was rendered more brilliant by a fearful lightning, and there issued from a burning cloud, which suddenly arose, a fiery dart which rushed into the well. Terrified, my mother quitted her hold of the cord that held me, and I was precipitated to the bottom of the well; when I immediately became sensible that the lower half of my body was transformed into so much of an enormous whale. I swam about for a short time, and then began calling on the queen with all my might. She did not answer, at which I was very much afflicted; and I was crying very bitterly, as much for the loss of my mother as at my metamorphosis, when I felt an unknown power forcing me to descend; and, having arrived at the bottom of the water, I entered a chrystal grotto, in which I observed a sort of nymph, shaped something like a frog, but exceedingly large, and rather dirty. However, she smiled when she saw me; and said: 'Minikin, I am the nymph of the bottomless well, and am called Citronetta; I have orders to receive you here, and to make you perform the penance to which you are doomed, for having omitted your bath: follow me and make no reply.' She took hold of my tail, and dragged me unresistingly into a green marble saloon, which was near her grotto; and there placed me in a golden tub full of water, when I began to recover my spirits. The good nymph appeared to be in ecstacies. I informed her of the events of my life, and then begged her to tell me what was become of the king and queen.

"She was about to answer me, when a frightful marmot, as large as a human creature, entered the saloon, and froze me with horror. She walked upright on her hind legs, leaning on a golden wand. She came up to the tub, in which I would fain have drowned myself, I was so terrified, and touching me with her wand: 'Minikin,' said she to me, 'you are in my power, and nothing can withdraw you from it, but your obedience and that of the prince whom my sisters have destined to be your husband. Listen to me; and divest yourself of your fear, which does not become the daughter of a king. From your infancy, I wished to protect you and marry you to my nephew, the King of the Whitings: Effulgent, however, and two or three more of my sisters, had already taken upon themselves to provide you with a husband; and angry in consequence, I let the effects of my ill-humour fall upon you. Having no power over my sisters, I resolved to punish you for their stubbornness; and so ordained that you should be transformed into a creature, half woman half whale, for at least the half of your life. My sisters cried shame on such injustice; so I was induced to diminish the effects of my vengeance; but for my complaisance, I reserved to myself the determination of marrying you to my nephew. Effulgent, who is somewhat imperious, and whose power is unfortunately superior to mine, would not hear of this reservation, because she had destined you for a prince who was under her protection. I was accordingly obliged to accede to her wishes, notwithstanding my resentment; and all that I could obtain was, that the one who should deliver you from my power should become your husband. These are their portraits,' added the fairy, handing to me two golden cases: 'you will know them by their likenesses; and if one of them come to deliver you, it is necessary that he should promise to marry you in your present condition; and in order that you may quit it, he must tear off all your scales one by one; otherwise, you will remain half a fish all your life. My nephew will not have the slightest objection to this proposition; but with regard to the *protégé* of Effulgent, he will not at all like the latter condition; for he appears to me to be a very delicate young gentleman. Employ then your utmost address to make him scale you; and that achieved, your misfortunes will cease; if indeed it be a misfortune to be a very beautiful whale, fat and well fed, with water up to your neck.'

"This speech, to which I made no reply, made me very sorrowful; both on account of my metamorphosis and of the scaling I was doomed to undergo.

"Marmotta disappeared; leaving us the two boxes which contained the portraits. I was weeping at the thoughts of my unfortunate situation, quite regardless of the boxes, when the kind and compassionate Citronetta said: 'Come, let us not lament misfortunes which it is not in our power to remedy. Let us amuse ourselves by examining the portraits.' With that she opened one of the two boxes; and showing it to me, we both uttered a shriek of horror, on seeing the portrait of an ugly Whiting, on which, however, the artist had bestowed as much beauty as he could; but still, never in the memory of man was any thing seen so frightful. 'Take the detestable object from my sight;' said I, 'I cannot endure to look on it longer. I would sooner remain a whale all my life than marry the horrible Whiting.' My companion did not give me time to finish my imprecations on the monster: 'See,' said she, 'look at this young beauty; I declare that he may scale you whenever he chooses; and you will be but too happy to suffer by his hands!' I quickly turned to see if what she stated were true, and was but too soon convinced. *A handsome and agreeable countenance presented itself to my sight;* tender and expressive



eyes gave a finishing charm to a set of features in themselves noble and majestic. "I gazed on this charming portrait with a pleasure of which I was myself unconscious, and which I had never felt till then. Citronetta was the first to remark it. 'In good faith,' said she, 'our choice is soon made.' I awakened the good-natured Citronetta twenty times in the course of the night to converse with her about my prince; and she soon found out his name for me, and informed me that he hunted almost every day in the forest under which I was incarcerated. She proposed to me that she should try to entice him to our abode; but I would not consent, although I was dying with anxiety to see it accomplished.

"One day when I was more low-spirited than usual, for love has this peculiarity, that it disposes the tender heart to melancholy, I saw the frightful Marmotta enter the saloon, accompanied by two persons whom I did not immediately recognize. It instantly struck me that she was bringing her unlucky nephew, and I uttered frightful cries. They hastened up to me, and I heard the wicked Marmotta say: 'Why she could not make more noise if they were scaling her; she cries out before she is hurt.'—'Good Heavens, sister!' said one of the persons who accompanied her, and in whom I recognized with joy the two fairies who had formerly visited my father's cottage, 'let us hear no more for the present about the scaling, but let us tell Minikin what we have got to say to her.'—'Oh! by all means,' said Marmotta, 'but you know the conditions.'

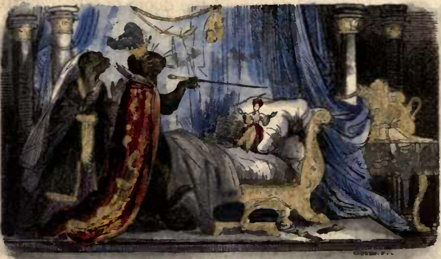
"The good fairy without heeding or replying to her words, spoke to me as follows: 'Minikin, we are too much afflicted by your unhappy condition not to endeavour to change it, and especially as you have not deserved it. I and my sisters have therefore determined to lighten your misfortune as much as may be in our power. Our scheme is this: you are going to be presented at the court of the prince to whom I have destined you from your cradle; but, my dear child, you will not appear there in your present form; although you are destined to return to it three times a week and pass the night in your tub: for, until you are married——' — 'And scaled,' interrupted the hideous Marmotta, with a sardonic grin. The good fairy turned towards her, shrugged up her shoulders, and immediately continued: 'for until you are married you will remain a whale here. More than this we cannot tell you; but you will learn all in good time. Above all, be very careful to keep your secret; for if a single word escape you which has a tendency to make it known, neither I nor my sisters can assist you more; and you will be wholly in the power of my sister Marmotta.'—'Which she will be,' said that wicked fairy, 'I already see her in my clutches; a secret kept by a girl, indeed, would be a phenomenon!'

"'That is her business;' said Effulgent (for it was she who had been speaking to me all along). 'As to the rest my daughter,' she continued, 'you will be changed into a little enamel doll, but will retain both reason and speech, and we will preserve your real features; and now I give you a week to consider whether what I have proposed be agreeable to you.'

"There wanted only one day to the fairies' appointment, when Citronetta, who had assumed the shape of a wild boar; and had gone to the forest to procure me news of Zirphil, returned, followed by that too amiable prince. I cannot express to you my joy at seeing him; there are no words expressive enough to convey even a distant idea of what I felt. But what delighted me most was to perceive that the prince appeared enchanted with me; at least I inferred so from his looks. Citronetta, more anxious for my happiness than for our momentary transport, dissipated it, by proposing to prince Zirphil to marry me or to scale me. Brought back to recollection, and feeling the danger of our situation, I joined my tears and entreaties to Citronetta's; and by our supplications we induced the prince to pledge to me his faith. We had no sooner exchanged rings: than he vanished unaccountably from my sight; and I found myself in my proper shape, lying in a comfortable bed. I was no longer troubled with the thoughts of being metamorphosed; still I was confined in the bowels of the earth, in the green marble saloon, and Citronetta had lost the power of quitting it and of transforming herself.

"I expected the return of the fairies with fear and trembling.

Marmotta appeared at day-break, unaccompanied by Effulgent or her companion, and not looking more angry than usual. She touched me with her wand, without saying a word, and *I became a charming little doll;* when having put me in her toothpick-case, she transported herself to the palace of the queen my husband's mother. She gave me to her, with orders to espouse me to her son, or expect all the misfortunes that lay in her, Marmotta's, power to draw upon her; adding that I was her god-daughter and called the princess Minikin. I conceived a very strong friendship for my mother-in-law; I loved her for her good qualities, independent of her being the mother of my adored Zirphil; and I was blessed with her friendship in return. I was transported, however, every night to the green marble



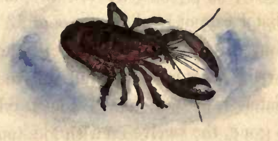
saloon, in company with my husband. I cannot divine why I was forbidden to tell him my secret, since I was married to him; however I did keep it, notwithstanding Zirphil's impatience to learn it.

"You are about to see," continued the speaker, sighing, "that it is impossible to avoid the doom of fate. "However," she added, "it is nearly day-break, and I am dreadfully fatigued with being so long out of the water; so let me return to the pond, and to-morrow, at the same hour, if we are not chosen for the broth of the wretched King of the Whitings, we will resume the thread of my story. Come, let us be moving."

Zirphil heard no more, and returned to his apartment, very sorrowful at not having apprized his princess that he was so near her; but the fear of increasing her misfortunes by his indiscretion, consoled him for not having attempted to do so: however, the dread of her perishing by his own hands, made him resolve to resume his enquiries among the craw fish, and to learn their histories.

Prince Zirphil went to bed, but not to sleep: he could not close his eyes all night. To have discovered his princess, to see her in the shape of a craw-fish, and in danger of being sacrificed to appease the appetite of the King of the Whitings, seemed to the prince to be a more dreadful punishment than the death to which he believed she was destined. He was in a cruel state of agitation, when a loud noise was heard in the garden. At first Zirphil only heard it faintly; but, on listening, he distinguished the sounds of flutes and conch-shells. He sprang out of bed, and looked through the window; when he saw the King of the Whitings, accompanied by the twelve men-sharks, who composed his council, walking in the direction of his pavilion. Zirphil hastened to open the door; and, the procession having entered, the king, in the first place, had his tub refilled with fresh sea water by the lords who were carrying him; then, after a few minute's rest, he took his place in the council, and addressed the young prince as follows: "Whoever you may be, you are apparently resolved that I shall die of hunger; for you send me day after day such wretched broth that I cannot swallow a spoonful." Then turning to an attendant, his majesty added: "Go to my kitchen and bring the craw-fish mortar; I would regale the council." A man-pike immediately ran and fetched what the king desired; and while he was gone, the twelve men-sharks took a large net and cast it through the window into the pond, catching three or four thousand craw-fish.

During the interval in which the council was employed fishing, and while the man-pike was gone for the king's pestle and mortar, Zirphil was absorbed in reflection; he felt that the most critical moment of his whole life was at hand, and that the question of his happiness or misery was about to be determined; but, summoning all his fortitude and resolution, he prepared to obey the king. The council ceremoniously presented the craw-fish, and the prince attempted to pound some of them; but a similar adventure happened with these, as had occurred with those which he had attempted to pound in the kitchen: the bottom of the mortar opened, and flames devoured them. The King of the Whitings and his rascally courtiers amused themselves for a long time with this extraordinary spectacle; taking great pains, and apparently receiving much pleasure, in continually refilling the mortar, until, at last, there was only one of the four thousand craw-fish remaining:



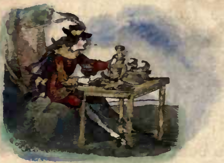
this was so large and plump, that it was charming to look upon. The king gave orders that some one should shell it, in order that he might eat some portion of this, at least; and it was accordingly handed to Zirphil, who was not a little grieved at this new cruelty; but his grief was redoubled, when he saw the poor craw-fish join its two claws; and when, its eyes streaming with tears, it said to him : "Alas ! Zirphil, what have I done to you, that you are about to treat me so cruelly ?" The prince, deeply moved by the words, and with a heart pierced with grief, looked sorrowfully at the craw-fish ; at last, he took upon himself to entreat the king to allow it to be pounded. The king, jealous of his authority, and unshaken in his resolution, was inflamed with anger at this humble petition ; and threatened to have Zirphil himself pounded if he did not immediately shell the craw-fish. The poor prince again took it from the hands of one of the men-sharks to whom he had entrusted it, and, with a little knife which was handed to him, began to shell it; but no sooner had the knife touched it, than the craw-fish uttered so piercing a cry, that the prince turned away his eyes and could no longer repress his tears. After a while, however, he continued his disagreeable task ; but, to his astonishment, before he had well finished shelling the craw-fish, it changed in his hands to the vile Marmotta ; who, leaping on the floor, convulsed with loud and disagreeable laughter, mocked at Zirphil's grief. The prince, however, was at sight of her relieved from the oppressive fear under which he had been labouring, and which had nearly made him swoon.

The king, in astonishment, cried out : "What ! is it possible that I behold my aunt ?"—"Yes, truly, it is herself," said the tormenting creature. "But my dear Whiting, I have come to inform you of terrible news." His majesty turned pale on hearing these words, and the council assumed an air of satisfaction which quite disconcerted the king and his frightful aunt. "It is all over, my darling," continued Marmotta, "and you must return to your watery kingdom; for this obstinate creature has taken it into his head to be so ridiculously constant, that I can do nothing with him. He has avoided all the snares that I laid in his way, in the hope of diverting him from his determination to carry off the princess; whom otherwise I had destined for you." On hearing these words the King of the Whitings went into such an excess of fury, that words cannot describe it; he committed a thousand extravagances which made it very apparent that he was the prey of violent and ungovernable passions. Marmotta in vain attempted to appease him; neither threats nor entreaties could prevail; he broke his china bowl into a thousand pieces, when all the water escaping, he swooned away. Marmotta, beside herself with anger, then turned to Zirphil, who had been a passive spectator of the violent scene; and said: "You have conquered, Zirphil, by the assistance of a fairy who is my superior in power; but all your sorrows are not yet over; you cannot be happy until after you have restored to my possession the case which contained the unlucky Minikin: Effulgent herself has granted me that; and I have obtained from her that you shall suffer until then." With these words she threw the King of the Whitings over her shoulders and bundled him into the lake, together with the men-sharks, the palace and all its inhabitants; and in a moment, Zirphil found himself alone at the foot of a high mountain, which stood in the midst of a large desert in which there was not the least sign of vegetation, nor of a human habitation. He looked in vain for the lake and the palace; all had disappeared at once. The prince was more afflicted than astonished at so extraordinary an event; he had become familiarized with prodigies, and was only sensible of the grief caused him by Marmotta's persecution. "I cannot doubt," soliloquized Zirphil, "that I have pounded my princess: yes, I have pounded her, and am no happier than I was before. Ah! barbarous Marmotta! and you, Effulgent too! even you leave me without assistance, after I have obeyed you at the sacrifice of all that so sensible a heart as mine holds dear." His grief, and the weariness consequent on his having passed the previous night in the grove, made him feel so excessively faint, that he would have most probably perished, but that his courage was unequalled, and his love inspired him with a wish to live.

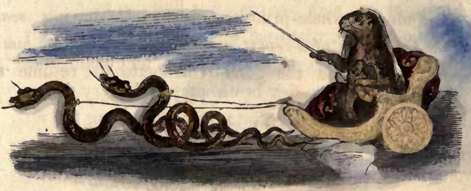
After walking onwards for a long while, our prince came to the brink of a well which was cut through the rock. Here Zirphil sat down to rest himself and began again to call on his protectress: "Oh! Effulgent," said he, "have you deserted me?" After repeating these words several times, he heard a voice proceeding from the well, say: "If Zirphil is there, let him speak to me." The prince's joy at hearing this voice, was increased by a hope that he recognized it as one to which his ear had been accustomed. He sprang to the brink, and answered, therefore: "Yes, I am Zirphil; and you, are you not Citronetta?"—"I am," said the voice; and Citronetta immediately arose from the well and embraced the prince. Words cannot paint Zirphil's joy at seeing her; he overwhelmed her with questions, relative to herself and to the princess; and it was some time before, the transport occasioned by their meeting being over, they spoke more rationally,

"I am about to communicate to you," said Citronetta, "all that you are anxious to learn. Since you pounded us, we have enjoyed a happiness which your absence alone renders incomplete; and I was here awaiting your arrival, by the directions of the fairy Effulgent, that I might instruct you as to what remains for you to do, in order to become the happy possessor, without further trouble or fear, of a princess whose love for you equals that which I know you feel for her: but, as some time must of necessity elapse before you can arrive at that happiness, I will do myself the pleasure to relate to you that part of the wonderful history of your amiable spouse of which you are as yet unapprized,"

Zirphil kissed repeatedly the hands of Citronetta, in token of his thanks; and followed her into her grotto, at the sight of which he was overcome with tender recollections, when he recognized it as the saloon in which he had for the first time seen his adored whale-princess. At last, having *seated himself, and partaken of a repast which was furnished for him by his ring,* he requested the good Citronetta to resume the history from the place where the princess had finished her narration. "As Effulgent will come to seek you here," said the nymph, "you shall, in the mean time, learn all that you wish to know. Know then, that the fairy Marmotta was not ignorant of your marriage; but she had transformed our mutual friend into an enamel doll, thinking that you would be disgusted with her in that shape. Effulgent herself was, however, as you have heard, at the bottom of that affair, and well knew that no power could deprive you of the princess if you married her,



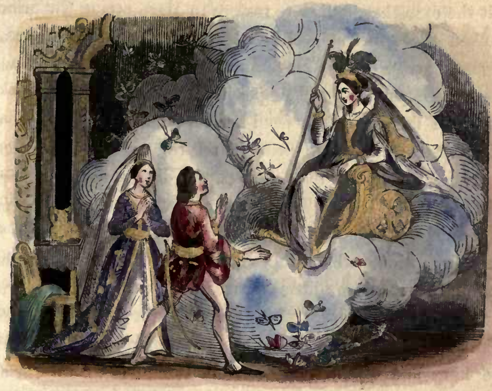
or destroyed her enchantment by scaling her. You married her; and you know what has since taken place. The last time that you saw the princess and myself, we were transformed into craw-fish, and placed in a little basket made of rushes, which Marmotta hung on her arm; *when seating herself in a chariot drawn by two adders,* we were speedily conveyed to the palace of the King of the Whitings. This palace had formerly belonged to the king who is the father of your princess; the city, changed into a lake, formed the place which we have inhabited ever since; and all the men-fish whom you saw, were the wicked subjects of that good king. The latter requesting to be made yeoman of the kitchen and keeper of the pestle and mortar to the King of the Whitings, Effulgent gratified him, by giving him a tap with her wand, when he immediately became a man-pike, such as you saw him in the discharge of his duty: now you need no longer be surprised at the tears you saw him shed when you brought the craw-fish to be



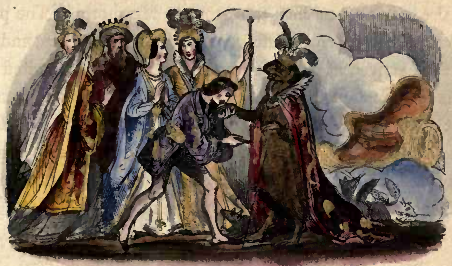
pounded; for, as he knew that his daughter had to undergo that punishment, he always feared that she might be among those which you brought him from time to time; and the unfortunate king had not a moment's peace, because his daughter had no means of making herself known to him. For the queen, she requested to be transformed into a craw-fish, in order to be with the princess, and her wish was likewise granted. With regard to ourselves, when we arrived at the palace, the fairy presented us to the King of the Whitings, and commanded him to have a basin of craw-fish broth prepared every day. After which order we were thrown into the pond among the rest.

At length you arrived, and we were presented to you; but we were not permitted to make ourselves known unless you should interrogate us; and we dared not infringe the law, so tired were we of submitting to its rigour, for having formerly disobeyed it in mere trifles. We were selected by you one morning, I and the queen; and we had not time to bid the princess adieu, ere you carried us to the kitchen. We had scarcely touched the bottom of the fatal mortar, when Effulgent herself came to save us; and, on restoring me to my proper shape, she transported me to this, my usual residence. I had the consolation of seeing the queen and our companions likewise, restored to their proper persons; but I do not know what has become of them. The fairy embraced me, and told me to await you here, and inform you of all that I have just told you when you should arrive here in search of the princess. I had been looking forward to the present moment with impatience, as you may well believe, Sir," continued Citronetta to prince Zirphil, who was listening to her attentively, "until, at last, yesterday, just as I had seated myself at the mouth of my well, Effulgent appeared. 'Our children will soon be happy,' said she to me, 'my dear Citronetta; Zirphil must restore to Marmotta her case, as an end to his labours, for he has scaled the princess.' 'Ah! great queen,' cried I, 'are we then so happy as to have an end to our fears?'—'Yes,' said she, 'you are indeed; Zirphil thinks he has only scaled Marmotta; but he has in reality scaled the princess, as Marmotta, being concealed in the handle of the knife wherewith he performed his terrible sacrifice, at the moment that he finished shelling the craw-fish, rendered the princess invisible to his eyes, and substituted herself, Marmotta, in her place."

"What!" exclaimed Zirphil, "and was it then my charming princess to whom I acted with so much cruelty? Alas! have I been barbarous enough to make her suffer this cruel punishment? O Heavens! she will never forgive me, nor do I deserve her forgiveness!" The unhappy Zirphil spoke so wildly, and appeared so grievously afflicted, that the poor Citronetta was herself grieved that she had communicated to him this cruel piece of intelligence. "So," said she at last, seeing the prince in a reverie, "so you did not know this?"—"I did not indeed," answered Zirphil; "for had I known it was my princess, I would rather have stabbed myself to the heart with the unlucky knife."—"But reflect," said Citronetta, "that if you had stabbed yourself to the heart, the princess would have remained for ever in the power of her enemy and of your detested rival; and that it is much better to have shelled her, than by killing yourself to have allowed her to remain miserable." This last argument, founded on the real state of the question, soothed the prince's grief, and Citronetta prevailed on him to take a little food, to keep himself alive. Just as they had finished their little repast, the vault of the saloon opened, and *Effulgent* appeared, *seated in a car made of a large carbuncle, and drawn by a hundred butterflies.* She alighted, assisted by the prince, who bathed the hem of her robe with a torrent of tears. The fairy raised him, and said: "Prince Zirphil, you will this day reap the fruit of your heroic actions. Be comforted, at last you will enjoy true happiness. I have overcome the fury of Marmotta by my entreaties; and your fortitude has disarmed her; come with me to receive your princess from her hands and mine."—"Ah! gracious madam," cried the prince, throwing himself on his knees, "am I not in a dream? is it possible that so much happiness can be real?"—"Do not doubt it,"

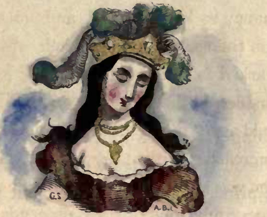


said the fairy; "come with me, Sir, to your kingdom, to console the queen, your mother, for your absence, and for the death of the king, your father; your subjects are impatient to crown you." The prince felt, notwithstanding his joy, a very lively grief on hearing the news of the king his father's death; but the fairy, to withdraw him from his sorrow, seated him by her side in her car, and allowed Citronetta to establish herself at their feet; then her butterflies displayed their brilliant wings, and took the direction of Zirphil's dominions. On their route, the fairy desired him to look inside his ring; he did so, and found in it the case that he had to restore to Marmotta. The prince thanked the generous Effulgent a thousand times, and they presently arrived at the kingdom where they were awaited with so much impatience. The queen, Zirphil's mother, came to assist the fairy to alight from her car; and all the people, on being instructed of the prince's return, made such long and hearty acclamations, that they partly dissipated the prince's grief. He tenderly embraced the queen, and they adjourned to a magnificent apartment prepared by her majesty for their reception, which they had no sooner entered, than Marmotta arrived in a little chariot, lined with Spanish leather, drawn by winged white rats. She brought with her the fair Minikin, in all the beauty of her natural figure, together with the king and queen, her father and mother. Effulgent and Zirphil's mother went out to receive and embrace Marmotta, and the prince, walking respectfully up to her, presented the toothpick-case and *kissed her paw, which she extended to him with a gracious smile.* Marmotta then permitted Zirphil to embrace his wife, and to present her to his parent, who embraced her with transports of the most lively affection. A general interchange of civilities then took place among the numerous persons comprising this illustrious assemblage, and joy reigned in every breast. Minikin and her charming husband alone spoke not, so much as they had to say to each other; their silence had a



certain touching eloquence which affected every one present. The good Citronetta shed tears of joy as she kissed the hands of her divine princess. At last Effulgent took them both by the hand, and leading them up to the queen, Zirphil's mother: "Behold madam," said she, "two young lovers, who only await your consent to complete their happiness; my sister, the illustrious king and queen here present, and myself, all join to request its fulfilment." The queen, of course, consented, in terms suitable to so polite a speech.

Then Marmotta touched the fair Minikin with her wand, and her dress, which before had been magnificent, was immediately changed into one of silver brocade, embroidered all over with gold; and her beautiful hair instantly arranged itself into a coiffure of such exquisite taste, that the kings and queens declared her dazzling charms to be absolutely perfect. In the mean while the toothpick-case which the fairy held in her hand, became a crown of brilliant diamonds, so beautifully set and so bright that the apartment and all the palace received a new lustre, as Marmotta *placed it on the princess's head.* The prince in his turn was dressed in a suit which perfectly matched with Minikin's attire; and from the ring which he had received from that princess, there issued a crown exactly like hers. They were immediately married, and proclaimed king and queen of that fine country. The fairies provided the royal banquet, at which, as may be expected, by those who know their extreme liberality, nothing was wanting. After staying a week with the young king and queen, and loading them with gifts, they departed, and restored Minikin's father and mother to their kingdom, the inhabitants of which had been so severely



punished for their faults that they had become a loyal and faithful people. With regard to Citronetta, the fairies gave her permission to spend some time with her beloved mistress; and also arranged that Minikin, by expressing a wish, might have the pleasure of seeing the nymph whenever she pleased.

The fairies having taken their departure, never were two persons so happy as king Zirphil and queen Minikin. Their felicity was in themselves and in each other; and their days flew by unmarked in their course, for all was joy. They had children, who blessed them by their goodness; and they attained an extreme old age: their mutual affection and desire of pleasing each other increasing with their years. After their decease their kingdom was divided; and, after innumerable vicissitudes, it has become, under one of their descendants, the flourishing empire of the great Mogul.

THE STORY OF PRINCE ELFIN.

Once upon a time there was a king and queen, who had an only son, of whom they were passionately fond, although he was any thing but handsome. He was as fat as an alderman, while his stature was that of the smallest dwarf. But the ugliness of his countenance and the deformity of his body were nothing, in comparison with the malice of his mind: he was an obstinate mule, and he made every body about him miserable.

From his tenderest infancy the king had observed this bad disposition, but, in the eyes of the queen, he was perfection itself. She nevertheless had a mind to bestow on him a name which should at once inspire respect and fear; so, after much consideration and research, he was christened Furibond.

When he was of an age to require a tutor, the king appointed to that office a prince who had some ancient claim to the crown, about which, however, he had long ceased to trouble himself; all his thoughts turning on the good education of his only son, Leander, a youth of the best disposition, and with a mind active and intelligent.

The king, having chosen this nobleman to train the mind of the young Furibond, ordered his son to be very obedient to his tutor; but the young prince was so stubborn that a hundred floggings had no effect upon him. The tutor's son, on the contrary, was beloved by all who knew him. The young ladies of the court felt their hearts beat more quickly at sight of the young Leander; but their charms had no effect on him: and he was called therefore the "handsome indifferent." He hardly ever quitted Furibond, and *their association only served to make the latter appear more hideous.* The monster never spoke to the ladies, but to utter some rudeness; and he was very fond of scandalizing them in his conversation with the queen, who, believing all he told her, would scold them, and

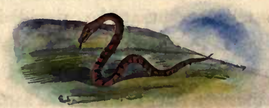
would even exclude them from her presence, by way of punishment for their reported sins.

One day some ambassadors having arrived at the court, the prince, accompanied by Leander, stationed himself in a gallery to see them pass. Directly the ambassadors perceived Leander, they walked up to him, and made him a profound salutation, testifying by signs their admiration; when observing Furibond, they took him for Leander's dwarf, laid hold of his arm, and turned and twisted him about like an eel: he foamed with spite and vexation.

Leander, in despair, whispered to them that it was the king's son, but they did not understand him: so, perceiving that they could not interpret his words or signs, he humbled himself still more before Furibond; at which the ambassadors, thinking that he was in jest, fillipped the poor prince's nose, according to the custom of their country, until, in a transport of rage, he drew his little sword, which was not longer than a fan. The king, coming into the gallery to receive the ambassadors at that moment, apologized to them for his son's anger.

When his father and the ambassadors were out of sight, Furibond laid hold of Leander by the hair of his head, tearing off two or three handfuls, and forbade him ever to appear before him again. Leander's father, offended at Furibond's conduct, sent his son to a castle that he had in the country.

One day Leander having walked for some time in the gardens, as the heat was increasing, entered a little wood, for the purpose of enjoying its shade. He sat himself down, and had begun to play upon his flute, when he felt something twisting several times round his leg; and, looking downwards, to his great surprise, saw *a large adder*. He pulled out his pocket-handkerchief, and having seized it by the head, was about to kill it, when, on observing it attentively, he fancied that it begged for mercy. One of his gardeners, seeing Leander with the adder in his hand, called out: "Hold it fast, my lord, I have been an hour in pursuit of the reptile to destroy it." Leander, looked once more at the adder, which, regarding him stedfastly in the face, did not endeavour to escape. At last, he



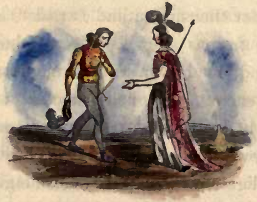
exclaimed: "Since, when you were about to slay it, it took refuge with me, I will protect it; and when it has cast its splendid skin, I will let it go." Leander then returned to his home, and locked the adder up in a large room, of which he kept the key himself, where it was fed with bran, milk, flowers, and grass, to nourish and amuse it.

All the ladies of the court were sorrowful at Leander's absence; they spoke only of him, and to express their wishes for his return, "Alas!" said they, "there has been no pleasure here since Leander departed, and we may thank the wicked Furibond for his absence."

Furibond, being informed of what the ladies said of him, flew into a furious passion, and went straightway to the queen's apartment, to tell her that he would immediately kill himself before her face, if she did not find means of having Leander put to death. The queen, who hated Leander, because he was more handsome than her ape of a son, replied that she would willingly do all that lay in her power towards bringing about his death. She advised her son to go hunting in the neighbourhood of his tutor's seat, in company with his most intimate acquaintance; when, if Leander should join them, he might easily find a mode of teaching the young lord what he got by making himself loved of every body.

Furibond accordingly went a hunting, when Leander, hearing the horns and the dogs in his father's wood, mounted a horse in order to ascertain what was going on. He was much surprised at suddenly meeting with the prince, who directly he saw Leander, desired the latter to follow him; at the same time making signs to certain persons who were in attendance, to make sure of their victim. But scarcely had Leander joined the prince, when a lion sprang from a thicket on Furibond and threw him on the ground. The assassins and his attendants immediately ran for their lives; and Leander alone remained to combat with the furious animal. He attacked him, however, courageously; and, by his valour and address, saved the life of his bitterest enemy, who had swooned away with fear. When Furibond had somewhat recovered, Leander generously offered him his own horse; but will it be believed? Furibond, furious at the obligation he had so unwillingly incurred, did not even look at Leander, and only accepted his horse, that he might regain the assassins, whom he commanded to slay his deliverer. They surrounded Leander, who fought like a man in despair. In a short time, Furibond, thinking Leander was killed, ran to the spot; but, what was his surprise, when he saw all the hired ruffians stretched lifeless on the ground! The young lord walked up to him and said: "Sir, if it was by your orders that these men sought my life, I regret having defended it so successfully."—"You are a scoundrel," replied the prince in a passion; and if ever you come into my presence, I will have you put to death."

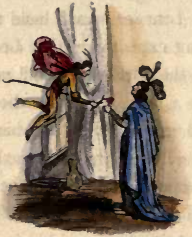
Leander returned home in a very sorrowful mood, and passed the night in reflecting on his situation, and considering what he had better do. At last, he resolved to travel; but, just as he was on the point of leaving the castle, he remembered the adder, and, seeking some milk and fruit, he carried them to it.



As he opened the door *he was surprised at seeing there a lady* whose dignified and majestic air, left no room to doubt the nobility of her birth; her dress was of crimson satin, embroidered with diamonds and pearls."—"Young prince," said she to Leander, "do not look for the adder you left in this room; it is no longer here, and you behold me in its place, to repay you for the obligations it owes to your kindness. Know that I am the fairy Gentilla: the fairies of the race to which I belong live to the age of one hundred years without growing old; and, that term expired, become adders during the space of a week. If, during that week they are killed, their existence terminates; but the week expired, they resume their proper shape, with their beauty, their power and their treasures. Tell me, Leander, in what way I can be of service to you; and rely upon my gratitude."

"Madam," said the young prince, "after the honour I have had of serving you, I have nothing to wish from fortune." "But consider," resumed Gentilla, "that I can make you a king; can prolong your life; give you mines of gold and diamonds: make you an excellent orator, poet, musician, or painter. I can gain you the love of the fair; I can make you an elfin-spirit of air, with power over earth and the waters." "Permit me, madam, to ask you," said the prince, "what advantage it would be to me, to be made an elfin-spirit?"—"It would make you the master of a thousand useful and agreeable things," answered the fairy: "you may be invisible when you please; you may traverse, in a single instant, the vast space of the universe; you may rise into and travel through the air without wings; you may penetrate without fear, to the centre of the globe; you may descend to the uttermost depths of the ocean; may enter wherever you please, neither doors nor windows can oppose your ingress; and, whenever you choose, you may assume your natural shape."—"Ah! madam," cried Leander, "I prefer then to be an elfin-spirit."—"Be an elfin spirit," replied Gentilla; "be Elfin the beloved, the amiable, the merry, and the happy." She then embraced Leander and gave him a little red cap ornamented with two parrot's feathers. "When you put on this cap," continued she, "you will be invisible; when you take it off, you will become visible again."

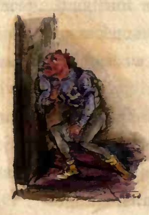
Leander, enraptured, thrust the little red cap on his head, and formed the wish to be transported into the wood to gather four wild roses that he had observed there. In an instant he became light as the wind, and was conveyed into the forest, to the very foot of the rose tree: he gathered three roses, and



returning, quick as thought to the room where the fairy still remained, he presented them to her. Gentilla bade him keep the roses, and told him that one of them would provide him with whatever money he might at any time require; that by placing the second in his mistress's bosom, he might inform himself as to her fidelity; while the third would preserve him always in health. Then wishing the prince good fortune in his travels, the fairy disappeared.

Leander thought it would afford him some amusement to avenge himself on Furibond; so, having speedily arranged his affairs, he mounted Eclipse, the handsomest horse in his stables, and sallied forth, attended by a few domestics, wearing his livery, in order that the news of his return to court might be more speedily known.

Now you must know, that Furibond had asserted that, but for his own bravery, Leander would have assassinated him on the day of the hunting expedition; that Leander had murdered all his people; and that he, Furibond, wished to have him brought to justice. The king, therefore, at the queen's earnest entreaty, had given orders for his arrest. When the queen was informed of the prince's arrival, she went to the king's apartment; while Furibond, impatient to learn the result of this interview with his father, followed her without saying a word. He stopped at the door, and placing his ear to the keyhole, put his hair aside, that he might hear the more conveniently. Leander entered the antichamber with his little red cap on his head, and consequently invisible; when perceiving Furibond, listening as described, he took a hammer and a nail, and fastened his ear to the door.

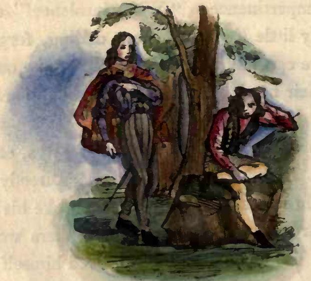


Furibond uttered loud cries. The queen hastened to open the door, and in so doing completely tore off her son's ear. Elfin then seized a little bunch of switches, and began to beat the queen with them on the hands, and then laid them smartly on her son's back. Her majesty screamed out lustily, and her son called out murder. The king hastened to the antechamber; the attendants rushed to their assistance; but as no one was to be seen, and they still kept shrieking, a whisper went round that the queen and her son were mad; and the king himself was the first to think so. At last, the good Elfin, having given Furibond a thousand more blows, quitted the apartment; and passing into the garden, rendered himself visible. He ran boldly and gathered strawberries and flowers from the queen's parterre. The astonished gardeners hastened to inform their majesties of his impertinence. "What insolence!" exclaimed the queen. "My little Furibond, dear darling, forget for a moment your sore ear, and pursue the villain; take our guards, put yourself at their head, catch him and make minced-meat of the rascal."

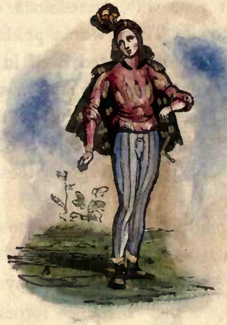
Furibond, followed by a thousand men at arms, entered the garden and saw Leander under a tree. Directly he saw Furibond, Elfin threw a stone at him, which broke his arm, and he pelted the guards with oranges. The soldiers would have pursued Leander, but he immediately rendered himself invisible. He then glided softly behind Furibond, and passed a cord between his legs which threw him on his face: he was picked up and borne to bed.

Leander, satisfied with his revenge, returned to the place where his people were awaiting him; and, having sent them back to his castle, mounted the handsome Eclipse; and, allowing him to choose his own road, presently came to a forest, where he determined to stay awhile, to enjoy its shade.

He had hardly been there a moment, when he overheard sighs and groans; and, looking around, perceived a man now running, now suddenly halting, weeping, tearing his hair, and bruising himself with blows. The prince moved by compassion, addressed him. "*You appear to be in such deep affliction*," said he, "that I cannot forbear asking you its cause."—"Alas! Sir," replied the young man, "my misfortunes are irremediable; my dear mistress is to be sacrificed to day to a jealous old barbarian."—"Does she love you then?" asked Leander. "I flatter myself she does," replied he. "And where is she?" continued the prince. "In a castle at the end of this forest," answered the lover. "Very well," said Leander; "await me here, and I will soon bring you good news of her." With that *he put on his little red cap*, and wished himself in the castle. He arrived there in a twinkling;

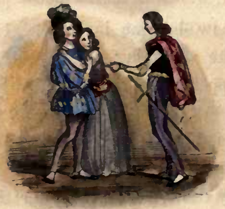


and walked at once into a great saloon, which was crowded with the relations and friends of the old man and the young lady.



Leander had now become invisible. He saw the father and mother of the charming young lady, scolding her in whispers for not appearing with the sprightly looks of a bride. Elfin stationed himself behind the mother's chair, and placing his lips near her ear, said: "So surely as you compel your daughter to give her hand to this old dotard, so surely shall you be punished by death before the expiration of eight days." The mother, terrified at hearing a voice and not seeing the speaker, fell on the floor, shrieking out that if the marriage proceeded she was a dead woman. The husband laughed at her, and said that she was a visionary fool; on which Elfin, stepping behind his chair, whispered into his ear: "If you do not give heed to your wife, incredulous old man, it shall cost you your life too." These words produced a wonderful effect, which immediately manifested itself in the dismissal of the bridegroom. He was about to demur, when Elfin rung such an alarum in his ears, that the old man thought he should never recover his hearing; and to complete his discomfiture, Leander trode so hard upon his gouty toes that he crushed them.

A search was instantly made for the disconsolate lover of the wood; and the feast which had been prepared for the nuptials of the old man, served for that of these happy lovers. *Leander,*



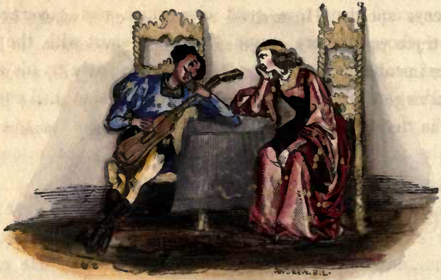
resuming his natural form, suddenly made his appearance, as a stranger drawn thither by the report of the wedding-feast.

When the bridegroom saw him, however, he threw himself at his feet and was eloquent in his thanks.

After spending a week at the castle, Leander resumed his journey, and came to a great city which was governed by a queen whose pleasure it was to fill her court with the handsomest people in her kingdom. Immediately on his arrival, Leander set up the most splendid equipage that had ever been seen in that country; and he was received by the queen and all the princesses, with every possible mark of esteem and consideration.

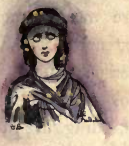
That court was truly a polite one; there, not to love was to incur ridicule. Leander was willing to comply with the custom, and determined to select a sweetheart. He cast his eyes on one of the queen's maids of honour, called the Beautiful Blondina, who was highly accomplished, but withal very cold and very formal.

In her honour he gave an enchanted feast, ball, or opera, every evening; but all was insufficient to move her. Leander was more arduous in his efforts to please Blondina, because he imagined that she had never loved; but, to make himself certain on that point, he resolved to make trial of his rose: so he placed it jestingly in Blondina's bosom. He had no sooner done so, than, fresh and blooming as it was, it became shrunk and faded. Leander wanted no further proof that he had a favoured rival; still, to be entirely convinced, he wished himself in Blondina's chamber. He soon saw *a very ugly musician enter; who, having seated himself,* yelled out three or four couplets which he had written in her praise; and though both the music and the words were execrable, Blondina thought they were the finest she had ever heard. Leander then laid hold of the intrusive musician: and, pushing him through an open window, threw him into the garden.



If a thunderbolt had fallen at Blondina's feet, she could not have been more astonished. Elfin returned to his apartment as he had left it; and wrote Blondina a letter containing all the reproaches that her conduct deserved. He departed, without waiting for her answer, fully determined never to love again after what had taken place

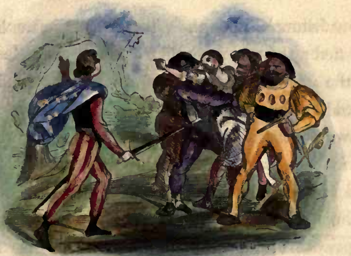
Mounted on his faithful Eclipse, Leander hastened away at immense speed. He arrived at another city, where he heard that there was to be a grand and solemn procession in honour of the installation of a young lady, against her will, among the vestal virgins. The prince was moved to compassion; he flew to the temple, and saw *the sorrowful young maiden,* two of her brothers leading her by the hands, and her mother following. Elfin cried out as loud as he could: "Stop, stop, wicked brothers, inconsiderate mother, stop! if you proceed any further, you shall be squeezed to death like so many frogs." They looked about on all sides, but could not perceive whence these terrible menaces came. The brothers asserted that it must be their sister's lover concealed in some corner, thus to play the oracle; whereat Elfin, in great anger, took a stick and beat them soundly. They could not avoid confessing that the



blows were substantial enough. Terror seized the vestals, and they hastily fled; the multitude likewise ran away, leaving Elfin alone with the young maiden. He immediately pulled off his little cap, and asked her wherein he might serve her. She made answer that there was a certain gentleman who was not indifferent to her, but who was very poorly off. Leander immediately shook the fairy Gentilla's rose, and so long, that he supplied her with ten millions; and the lovers married and lived very happily together.

But his last adventure was the most agreeable: for, as he was entering into an extensive forest, he heard the sorrowful outcries of a young person, as if some violence were being offered to her. He looked around him, and presently espied four well armed men, dragging a young lady apparently thirteen or fourteen years of age. Making up to them as fast as he could, he cried: "What harm has that young lady done, that you are treating her like a slave?"—"Ha, ha! my little master," said one who appeared to be the ring-leader of the troop, "who authorized you to interfere?"—"*I command you,*" *pursued Leander,* "*to set her at liberty this instant.*"—"Oh! by all means," cried they laughing. Thereupon the prince, in a passion, alighted from his horse, and put on his little red cap.

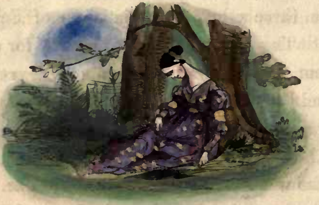
They must have had good eyes who could have seen him



when his cap was on. The robbers said: "He has fled, but he is not worth the trouble of running after; however, let us catch his horse." So, one stayed to take care of the young lady, while the three others went in chase of Eclipse; the young lady continuing her lamentations and cries for assistance. Leander, without delay, seized the arm of the ruffian who detained her, and bound him to a tree. On hearing his cries, one of his comrades came to the spot, quite out of breath, and asked him who had served him that trick. "I do not know," answered he who was bound; "I could see no one."—"You are a poltroon," answered the newly arrived, "and I will treat you as you deserve." With that, he gave his defenceless companion a sound lashing with a stirrup-leather.

Elfin, going up to the second robber, laid hold of his arm, and bound him to another tree opposite his comrade. "Hey-day, my fine fellow," said the first, "pray who has bound you? why, what a coward you must be to submit to it!"

Meanwhile Apricotina (which was the young lady's name), had profited by the opportunity thus afforded to escape; and had run away. Leander missing her, called three times for his horse Eclipse; who, feeling himself compelled to join his master, rid himself, by two kicks with his hoof, of the two robbers who held him. Now Leander only wanted to come up with Apricotina; for she had appeared to him to be very pretty: so he wished to be in that young lady's company—and immediately found himself beside her. She was so very weary, that she had fallen, and was *leaning against a tree for support*.



When she observed Eclipse, who was trotting gaily along, she cried: "How lucky I am! here is a pretty horse who will carry back Apricotina to the Palace of Pleasures." Elfin went up to her, though she could not see him, and made Eclipse halt, when she sprang on his back; and Elfin, taking her gently in his arms, placed her before him. Oh! was not Apricotina afraid, to feel herself embraced and to see no one!

Leander then took off his little cap, and Apricotina recognized him. "Ah! Sir," said she, "I am infinitely indebted to you!" Leander requested her to inform him of her age and her country, and by what mischance she had fallen into the hands of the robbers. Apricotina, divested a little of her fears, answered the Elfin-prince as follows:

"A certain fairy fell so violently in love with a prince, that she married him in spite of all opposition on the part of the other Fairies. They would not permit her to reside any longer with them; and all that she was allowed, was to build a grand palace near their kingdom. But it came to pass that the prince, her husband, in despair at her fore-knowledge of all his actions, grew tired of her. If the prince only looked on another woman, his fairy-consort cast a spell on her; and, though she were the prettiest creature in the world, made her frightfully ugly.

"The prince, not liking so inconvenient a tenderness, set out one fine morning on horseback, and travelled to an immense distance from his palace, intending to conceal himself in a large cavern at the foot of a high mountain, where he thought his wife would not be able to discover him. However, he was mistaken: she followed him; informed him that she soon expected to have a baby; and conjured him to return to his palace. She could not, however, persuade him to do so. 'Very well,' said she, 'I abandon you to your folly: remain in your obscure cavern.'

"With that the fairy entered her flying chariot, and departed more swiftly than a bird. When she had arrived at her palace, she banished from it all the guards, officers and men-servants, and transported it to a certain island; she then raised an army of amazons, and kept parties of them continually on guard, to prevent any man from landing thereon. She called this spot, the Island of Tranquil Delights; and always affirmed that no real pleasure could be enjoyed in the society of men. At last she gave birth to a daughter, and brought her up in the same opinion. Than this daughter, there never was a more charming person: she is the princess on whom I attend; and, as tranquil pleasures reign in her presence, no one grows old in her palace. I dare say I look to you to be very young; but, such as you see me, I have been for more than two hundred years.

"I do not remember, during all my life, to have seen a man excepting yourself, Sir, and the four ruffians who carried me off.

The latter told me that they were sent by a very ugly and deformed man, called Furibond, who is in love with my mistress, though he has only seen her portrait. He has been rowing all round the island, unable to effect a landing, because of the vigilance of our amazons, who keep watch day and night. I have to take care of the princess's birds; and this morning, unfortunately, her favourite parrot escaped. Fearful of being scolded, I imprudently left the island to go in search of it; when four of his people caught me, and, but for your timely assistance, would have carried me off."

"If you are sensible to gratitude," said Leander, "may I not hope, beautiful Apricotina, that you will procure me admission to the Island of Tranquil Delights, and a sight of your wonderful princess who does not grow old?"—"Ah! Sir," answered she, "it will cost both of us our lives if we only attempt it."

As Apricotina was saying these words, they arrived at the bank of a large river. She gracefully alighted: and, addressing the prince, said: "Adieu, Sir; I wish you so much happiness that all the world may be to you the Island of Delights." "And I," said Leander, "wish you a sensible heart, that I may occasionally have some share of your remembrance."

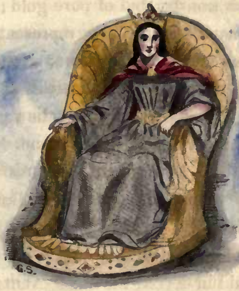
With these words he galloped away, and soon entered the thickest part of a wood. Here Elfin unsaddled and unbridled

Eclipse, that he might graze at liberty; and, putting on his little red cap, wished himself in the Island of Tranquil Delights. His wish was immediately accomplished, and he found himself in a place the most beautiful and the most extraordinary in the world.

The palace was constructed of pure gold; it was raised on columns of precious stones made to represent the signs of the zodiac, and all the wonders of nature, science, and art. The four elements, the sea, and all the varieties of fish and monsters therein contained, the noble exercises of the amazons, the amusements of a country life, flocks of sheep attended by shepherdesses and their dogs, the toils of agriculture, harvests, gardening, flowers and bees were there pictured. But among all this variety of representation, there was neither man nor boy to be seen, not even the little winged cupid.

"Apricotina did not deceive me at all events," said the prince to himself, "the very idea of man seems to be banished hence: let us see whether they have lost any thing in consequence." He entered the palace, and saw in every direction ladies of dazzling beauty. He passed through a vast number of noble apartments, each of them surpassing the other; the walls of the princess's presence chamber were composed of one entire mirror, so that the reflection of its charming mistress met the sight in every direction.

When Elfin entered, she was seated on her throne. Her air had all the innocence of the most youthful years, joined to the more dignified deportment of a maturer age: nothing could equal the intelligent vivacity of her eyes; *it was impossible to find a defect in her person.*



Missing Apricotina, she asked her maids of honour what had become of her. The nymphs made answer that they had sought her in vain; and that she had suddenly disappeared. Elfin who had just entered, assumed the voice of a parrot (for there were several in the chamber), and said: " Charming princess, Apricotina has had a very narrow escape from being carried away: she was, however, saved by a young prince, who rescued her from her ravishers; and will soon

return."—"*You are a very pretty bird, little parrot,*" said the princess, "but you are telling a story; and, when Apricotina comes, she shall whip you."—"I shall not be whipped," answered Elfin; "and when Apricotina comes, she will inform you of the very great desire that the stranger had to get admission into this palace, in order that he might convince you of the fallacy of those ideas which you harbour against his sex."—"In truth, pretty parrot," cried the princess, "it is a pity that you are not every day so intelligent; I should love you dearly."—"Oh! if prattling will please you, madam," replied Elfin, "I will not cease to prate from morning till night." At that moment Apricotina entered the presence chamber; and, throwing herself at the feet of her fair mistress, she gave a circumstantial account of her adventure, describing our prince in the most lively and advantageous terms.

"I should have hated all men," concluded she, "if I had not seen him. O, madam, how charming he is; yet, I think I did well in not bringing him hither!" The princess made no reply; but she asked Apricotina a multitude of other questions, and presently fell into a profound reverie.

Elfin examined every thing about him, and continued his prattle: "Apricotina is ungrateful, madam," said he; "the poor stranger will die of grief if he do not see you."—"Well, parrot, he must die then," answered the princess sighing.

It now grew late, and the princess retired into a saloon of marble and porphyry. As soon as she had entered, music began, and a sumptuous supper was served up. Round the sides of the saloon were disposed aviaries, containing *peacocks,*

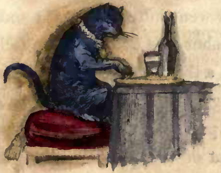
turtle-doves, and innumerable varieties of rare birds, of which Apricotina had the chief care.

Leander had learned, in the course of his travels, to imitate the singing of various birds. The princess, having risen from table, approached an aviary, when Elfin began to warble by way of overture; after which, assuming the voice of a canary-bird, he sang these words:

How vain are all the joys which youth
In other dreams can hope to find;
Love only, constancy and truth,
Can sooth the heart and ease the mind.

The princess, in astonishment, summoned Apricotina, and asked her if she had taught the canary-birds to sing. Apricotina answered that she had not; but, that she saw no reason, why canary-birds should not know how to sing as well as the parrots. The princess smiled, and reseated herself at table to finish her supper.

Leander then drew near the grand supper-table. The princess had a curious blue cat, to which she was very partial. One of her maids of honour who was in attendance, and who held this cat in her arms, said: "Madam, Tom is hungry!" Thereupon, a cushioned stool was placed for puss before *a little golden plate* and a laced finger napkin, which were laid for his accommodation; and *Tom sat down to table.* He wore a pearl



necklace, to which was attached a small bell; and, having seated himself with all the important gravity of an alderman, he began to eat. "Ho, ho," said Leander to himself, "this idle, well-fed creature is to eat all the delicate morsels, while I may content myself with the steam!" Saying this, he seated himself on the stool, and placed the blue cat on his knee; no one seeing prince Elfin, because he had his little red cap on.

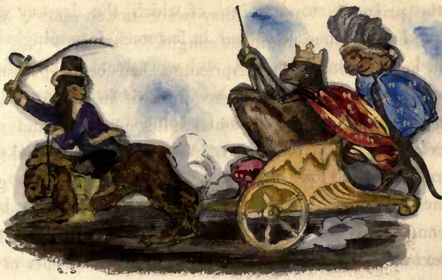
The princess supplied Tom's golden plate with partridges, quails, and pheasants; and partridges, quails, and pheasants all disappeared in a trice. There were excellent ragouts on the table, and the prince Elfin made use of the cat's paw to taste them. It chanced, however, that he pulled the cat's paw a little too roughly; when Tom, not understanding raillery, began to mew, and would have scratched him, being quite out of patience. The princess, noticing his ill humour, said: "Bring that tart or that fricassee to poor Tom: he is longing to taste it."

The princess now went into her closet; and desired Apricotina to follow her and shut the door. Elfin followed close on her heels; and formed a third party, without being perceived. The princess, imagining herself alone with her confidante, said to her: "Confess, Apricotina, that you exaggerated somewhat to me, in your account of this unknown."—"Madam," answered the young lady, "I protest that, if I have failed in anything, it is in giving you a sufficiently good idea of him." The princess sighed; and, after a short silence: "I am very glad," she resumed, "that you refused to bring him with you."—"But, madam," replied Apricotina (who was an artful girl, and already read clearly her mistress's thoughts), "will you then live eternally unknown in this corner of the world?"—"Hold your tongue, chatter-box," said the princess, "and do not attempt to disturb the happy tranquillity I have enjoyed during six centuries."

Apricotina dared not reply; but the princess, after waiting some moments, asked her whether she had any thing further to say. To this Apricotina made answer, that she thought it was to very little purpose that she should have sent her portrait to the courts of several princes. "Notwithstanding that," said the princess, "I should be glad that my portrait should fall into the hands of this stranger you tell me of, although I am unacquainted with his name."—"Oh! madam," replied Apricotina, "is not his desire to see you already sufficiently violent; and would you augment it?"—"Yes," cried the princess; "a certain impulse of curiosity, which I never felt till now, has given birth to this foolish whim." Elfin listened to all this, careful not to lose a word.

It was growing very late; so the princess retired to her bed-chamber: Elfin took care to be there also, and concealed himself in a closet that opened from it. The princess presently asked Apricotina whether she had seen any thing extraordinary in her short travels. "Madam," answered the young lady, "I passed through a forest where I saw certain animals that resemble little children; they skip and dance among the branches of the trees like squirrels; they are very ugly, but their nimbleness is wonderful."—"I wish I had one of them," said the princess; "and if they were not so nimble as you describe, one of them might be caught."

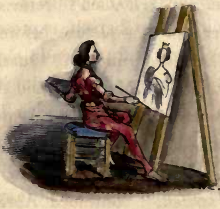
Elfin had no doubt that Apricotina had been speaking of monkeys. He immediately wished himself in the forest, and having caught a dozen, some small and some large, and all of different colours, he wished himself at London. Arrived there, he purchased a little golden chariot, which he taught six green monkeys to draw, their harness being made of flame-coloured morocco-leather and gold. He then wished himself at Camberwell fair, where Wombwell, a famous keeper of wild beasts, was exhibiting; and there, prince Elfin selected two monkeys of rare merit, the most talented of which was named Jocko, and the other Bobadil. He dressed Bobadil like a king, and placed him in the chariot, making Jocko postillion; the other monkeys he dressed like pages; and never was any thing seen so charming as that miniature equipage. Elfin put them, chariot and all, into a sack; and before the princess was yet gone to bed, she heard in her gallery the rattling of the little chariot wheels. At this moment one of her nymphs entered her chamber, to inform her of the arrival of the king of the dwarfs, *and at the same time the chariot drove into her chamber, attended by the monkey train.* Elfin (still invisible) assisted Bobadil to alight from the little golden chariot, the monkey holding in his paw a box set with diamonds, which he, to the



great amazement of the princess, presented to her with a very good grace. She immediately opened it, and found that it contained a note directed to herself, expressive of the writer's admiration for her charms and written in elegant verse. The princess, uneasy at not being able to divine its author, dismissed the monkey train that she might give herself up entirely to reflection.

Leander, being satisfied with the events of the evening, thought it was time for him to seek a little repose; but he was fearful lest he should chance to enter an apartment occupied by some of the princess's maids of honour. Presently, however, coming to an open door, he quietly entered an apartment on the ground-floor, the most beautiful and delightful that was ever seen. In it stood a bed, of which the drapery was of green and gold gauze, disposed in festoons, intermingled and enriched with pearls, rubies, and emeralds. Elfin tried to compose himself to sleep; but his thoughts ran on the beautiful princess, which kept him awake for some time.

Next morning, he rose so very early, that he was at a loss how to employ the long interval that must elapse before he could see the princess. Looking about him, he espied a painter's pallet and easel, with colours ready prepared, when the words that he had heard the princess utter to Apricotina relative to her portrait, came into his mind; so, without losing a moment, *he seated himself* opposite a mirror, and painted his own portrait; and then, in an oval, introduced that of the princess.



When the princess went into her cabinet, she was amazed to see the portrait of a man, with one of herself: it immediately struck her, that this was intended as a compliment to her by Apricotina; but then, the portrait of the gentleman; was it imaginary,—or had it an original? She rose in haste and called Apricotina, while the invisible Elfin, wearing his little red cap, slipped into the cabinet, curious to hear what would take place.

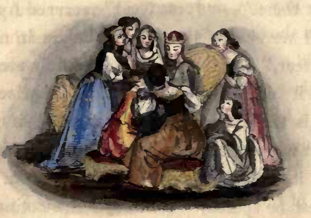
The princess instantly demanded of Apricotina what she knew of the picture. After this young lady had inspected it: "I protest, madam," cried she, "that it is the portrait of the generous stranger to whom I owe my life."—"You pretend to be surprised," said the princess, smiling; "but I know that you yourself put it there."—"I, madam!" returned Apricotina; "I declare that I never saw this picture before in my life."—"I tremble with fear," said the princess; "surely some spirit must have brought it hither."—"Madam," said Apricotina, "in my opinion, this is the work of some lover; and if you will take my advice, let us burn it immediately."—"Oh! it would be a pity to burn it," said the princess with a sigh. "Nay, no part of it must be spared," continued Apricotina, "not even your own portrait."

The damsel ran away immediately to order a fire. The princess, left alone with the painting, dared look no longer on an object which had made so deep an impression on her heart;

and turned to the window. Elfin took advantage of the opportunity to save his performance, and conveyed it away. Hardly had he got out of the cabinet, when the princess, turning round to look again on the portrait, found to her surprise that it was gone. Apricotina returning, she asked her if she had taken the picture away. The young lady assured her that she had not; and this last adventure put them into a terrible fright.

As soon as Elfin had concealed the picture, he returned to the cabinet; for he took great delight in hearing and seeing his charming princess.

The princess had an universal taste for fine things. One day, *when she was attended by all her nymphs*, she told them that it would give her great pleasure to know how ladies dressed in all the different courts of the universe, that she might select and adopt the most genteel from among them. This was all



that was necessary to make Elfin resolve to travel all over the world. He put on his little red cap, and wished himself in China, where he purchased the richest stuffs he could find, and procured patterns of dresses worn by the most distinguished ladies at the court of that empire. Thence he flew to Siam, where he did the same; and in three days he thus travelled over all the four quarters of the globe. Having in this manner collected an infinite quantity of fine things, he purchased five or six dozen dolls, which he caused to be dressed at Paris, according to the various fashions of the countries he had visited; and, this done, he arranged them in the princess's cabinet.

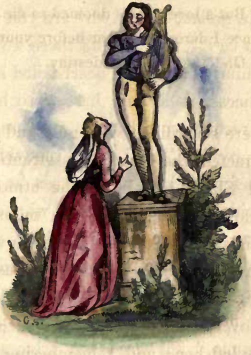
Never was any one more agreeably surprised than was the princess, when she entered the room. Each of the dolls was so made as to hold a present in its hands, as a watch, bracelets, diamond-buckles or a necklace; but the most remarkable of them offered a locket to the princess; which, when opened, she found to contain the portrait of Leander. She uttered a loud shriek; then, looking at Apricotina, said to her: "I know not what to think of the wonders that have for some time past been constantly occurring in this palace. Who can this fairy, or spirit be, who seems to take a pleasure in rendering to me these agreeable services?" Leander, overjoyed, immediately, wrote the following lines on his tablets, and threw them at the princess's feet.

"No fairy am I, no, nor goblin sprite,
But a lover who's doomed to die;
Since I dare not appear before your sight;
Oh! then pity my destiny.
PRINCE ELFIN."

The tablets were so brilliant with gold and jewels, that they immediately attracted the princess's attention; she opened them, and read Elfin's lines with the utmost astonishment. "My invisible lover must surely be a monster, since he is afraid to show himself," said she, "or he loves me not, since he can expose my heart to so severe a trial as to conceal the reality of this beauteous portrait."

Leander was overjoyed to find her so much interested about his picture. He left her; and remembering that there was, in a grotto that she often frequented, a pedestal on which it was intended to place a statue of Diana, not yet finished, he placed himself thereon, *holding a lyre in his hand.*

When the princess entered the grotto, she threw herself on a bank of green turf; sighed, and began to weep. Elfin who had put on his little red cap, that she might not see him at first, now took it off, and the princess regarded him with extreme surprise. Her first idea was that it was a real statue; and she was surveying, with admiration, a figure which so exactly resembled real life, when the prince, having attuned his lyre to

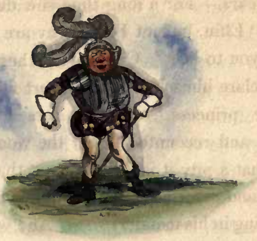


his voice, sang a few stanzas descriptive of his situation, and expressive of his love for herself. Notwithstanding that the princess was charmed with Leander's voice, she could not resist the fear that seized her; she fell into a swoon. Leander, in alarm, leaped from the pedestal, and put on his little red cap that he might not be perceived. He took the princess in his arms, and gave her all the assistance that his zeal and ardour could inspire; at length she opened her beautiful eyes, but could perceive nobody; yet she felt that some one was near her holding her by the hands, kissing them, and moistening them with tears. For a long time she durst not speak. Alas she cried: "Elfin, gallant Elfin, why are you not the person I could wish you to be?" On hearing these words Leander was about to declare himself; but his heart failed him.

Then the princess, believing herself to be alone, called Apricotina; and recounted to her the wonders of the animated statue. "What a pity it is," said she, "that this Elfin should be so frightful and deformed! for nothing can be more amiable or more engaging in his manners!"—"And who told you madam," replied Apricotina, "that he is as frightful as your imagination paints him? Did not Psyche think that Cupid was a serpent? your case and hers are somewhat similar. If Cupid loved you, should you not return his love?"—"If Cupid and the unknown person were the same," answered the princess, blushing, "I should, alas! be content to love Cupid." It is easy to imagine the pleasure that this conversation gave Leander.

In the mean time, the little Furibond had impatiently awaited the return of the four men, whom he had sent to the Island of Tranquil Delights. At last, one of them, having arrived, informed him that, unless he sent a very powerful army, it would be impossible to effect a landing on the island.

The king his father had been some time dead, so that Furibond was now lord of all. He therefore levied an army, upwards of four hundred thousand strong, and put himself at their head.



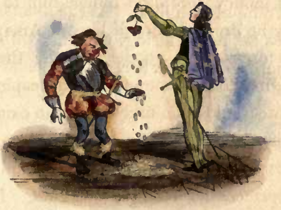
He made a fine general, as you may suppose, looking like another Tom Thumb on his war-horse, which was only about five hands high. When the Amazons observed his mighty army, they immediately gave notice to the princess; who, thereupon, despatched her trusty Apricotina to the kingdom of the fairies, to request her mother's advice as to what she ought to do, in order to drive the little Furibond from her dominions. But Apricotina found the fairy in a very angry humour: "I am ignorant of nothing that my daughter does," said she; "prince Leander is at this moment in her palace; he loves her, and is beloved by her. All my cares have been insufficient to guard her from the tyranny of love, and she is now under his fatal dominion. Therefore, Apricotina, be gone; I will not hear a word more of my daughter, whose sentiments are so displeasing to me."

Apricotina returned to the princess with these bad tidings: Elfin was near her though she could not see him. He durst not speak to her at that moment; but, remembering that Furibond was very covetous, he thought that by giving him a large sum of money, he might induce him to retire.

Accordingly he dressed himself like an Amazon, and wished himself in the forest. No sooner was he there than having called Eclipse, his horse came up to him, leaping and prancing. Leander mounted, and soon arrived at the camp of Furibond, where every one took him for a real Amazon; the king was promptly informed that a young lady wished to speak with him from the princess of Tranquil Delights. Immediately, the little king put on his royal mantle, and placed himself on his throne: looking exactly like a great toad acting the king.

Leander gave him to understand that the princess, preferring a quiet and peaceable life, had sent him to make an offer to his majesty of as much money as he pleased to demand, provided he would suffer her to remain in peace. Furibond replied that he took pity on her; and that upon her sending him the moderate sum of a hundred thousand thousand thousand millions of pistoles, he would return to his kingdom. Leander said that it would take too much time to count a hundred thousand thousand thousand millions of pistoles, and that he had only to state how many rooms full he required.

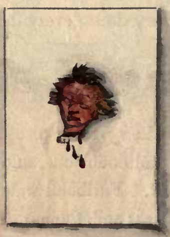
To this Furibond answered that he would be satisfied with thirty very large rooms quite full of gold coin. Leander was conducted to the chambers that were to be filled. *He took his rose and continued to shake from it* pistoles, sequins, sovereigns, guineas, rose-nobles and doubloons, until the rooms were all as full as they would hold. Furibond watched the coins falling as thick as hail, in ecstacies; and, the more he saw, the greater was his desire to seize the Amazon, and get the princess into his power.



Directly Furibond saw the last room was quite full, he cried to his guard: "Seize this Amazon, she is a bad one, all this money that she has just paid me is counterfeit coin." Ere the guards had time to lay hands on him, Elfin put on his red cap and disappeared. The guards, believing that the Amazon had escaped, ran out and left Furibond alone; when

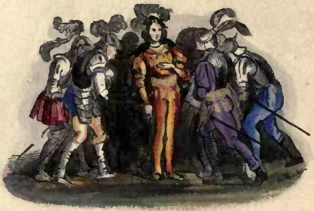
Elfin seized the deformed tyrant by the hair and cut off his head, as easily as he would have cut off a pullet's, without the wretched king seeing the hand that slew him.

Leander, holding the head in his hand, wished himself in the Palace of Tranquil Delights. At the moment of his arrival, the princess was taking an airing, thinking with sorrow on the message her mother had sent her. On a sudden she beheld a *head suspended in the air*, without any body, that she could see, to hold it. This prodigy astonished her much; but her astonishment was increased when she saw the head laid at her feet, without seeing the hand that held it, and heard at the same time a voice utter these words:



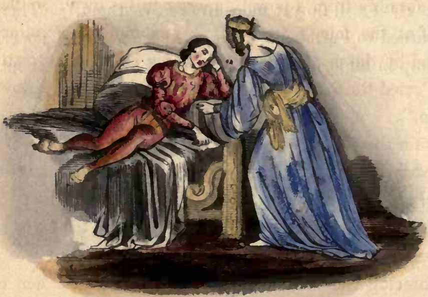
"Charming princess, cease your fear
Of Furibond; whose head is here."

Apricotina immediately recognized Leander's voice, and cried: "I protest madam, that the invisible person who speaks, is the stranger who rescued me."—"Ah!" said the princess, astonished yet pleased, "if it be true that the invisible and the stranger are the same person, I confess that I should be happy to make him my acknowledgments." Elfin, still invisible, made answer: "I will do yet more to deserve them." Thereupon, he returned to Furibond's army. As soon as he appeared in the camp in his ordinary dress, every body came about him:



the officers and soldiers uttered loud acclamations of joy, and acknowledged him for their king. Leander thanked them; and, as a mark of his royal bounty, divided among them the thirty rooms full of gold, so that his four hundred thousand soldiers were enriched for ever. This done, he ordered his army to march back into his kingdom and returned to the island. The princess had retired to bed, and the profound respect Leander felt for her would not permit him to enter her chamber; he therefore retired to another, but forgot his usual custom of making fast the door.

The princess could not sleep, owing to the great disquiet of her mind; she rose therefore before day-break, and descended in her morning-gown into one of the lower apartments. But who can paint her surprise *at seeing Leander there, asleep upon the bed.* She had leisure to convince herself that he was the person whose portrait she had in her diamond box. "It is impossible," she said, "that this should be Elfin, for can elfin-spirits sleep?" She softly touched his hair, she listened to his breath, and could not tear herself from him.

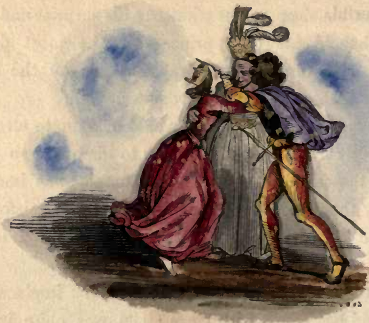


While the princess was attentively surveying him, her mother the fairy entered, making such a dreadful noise that Leander started from his sleep. But what was his surprise and affliction when he beheld his dear princess in the most deplorable condition! Her mother was dragging her by the hair and loading her with a thousand reproaches.

Leander judged rightly that it would be vain to attempt her rescue forcibly from a power superior to his own; so he threw himself at the fairy's feet, and his example was immediately followed by the princess. "You know not the misfortunes of love," cried the fairy, "nor the treacheries of which lovers are capable."

In vain the two young lovers entreated the implacable fairy, and bedewed her hands with tears; she was quite insensible, and very probably would never have pardoned them, if the amiable fairy Gentilla had not at that instant appeared in the chamber.

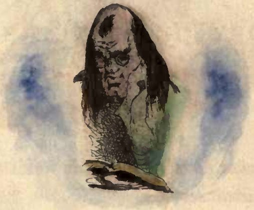
Embracing the old fairy, Gentilla reminded her of the services she had rendered her; and requested, as a recompense, that she would pardon the princess, and consent to her union with the young prince. "Charming Gentilla," answered the old fairy, "I consent to whatever you desire. *Come, come to my arms, dear children,* and receive the assurance of my love. I will further," added the fairy mother, "transport the Island of Tranquil Delights, the castle and all the wonders that it



contains into Leander's kingdom; I will reside there with them and will do them great services."

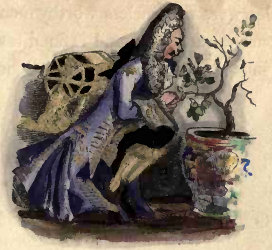
This being done, Gentilla, thoughtful for all, transported the captains and officers of Furibond's army to the princess's palace, that they might behold the splendid spectacle destined to take place at the wedding of Leander and the princess. What is rather extraordinary is, that every one of the princess's attendants immediately found, among the brave men brought by Gentilla, a lover more tender and passionate than though they had been acquainted for ten years. Nevertheless, the acquaintance was only of about twenty-four hours' standing;

but the wand of a fairy is capable of producing effects still more wonderful.

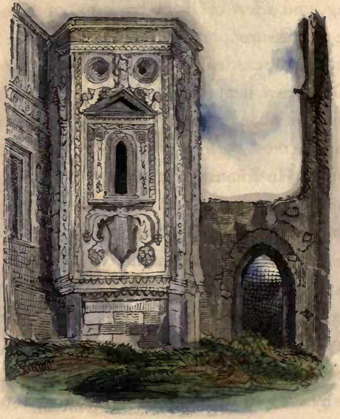


THE STORY OF PRINCE SINCERE.

THERE was once upon a time, in the country of Zinzolantines, a king who had an extreme passion for silk-worms; he spent whole days in his gardens gathering mulberry leaves for their nourishment; the remainder of his time he spent in his closet, *watching those little animals at work,* and making skeins of the silk they had spun; for he could find no one to do this to his satisfaction: in fact, no one could perform this office so well



as his majesty. He frequently made presents of his skeins to the lords of his court, most of them, of course, silk-worm fanciers, as they, like all true courtiers, gloried in imitating their sovereign. Now what was the consequence of all this? Politeness and wit abandoned an abode where they were so slightly esteemed; rudeness and folly seized upon the youth of the court; and weariness or ennui fell to the lot of its fairest ladies. Hopeless of having their charms and accomplishments appreciated by men who only understood and admired the beauty of silk-worms and the fineness of their silk, nearly all the ladies retired into the distant provinces of the kingdom. In one of these there was formed a little court, not of princes, not of dukes, nor even of marquises (from all, of these ranks, the ladies had experienced too much neglect and rudeness), but of persons of a less elevated grade; who, possessing none of the above titles, were not the less worthy men on that account. At this little court were to be found refined tastes and virtuous principles; its inhabitants cultivated the sciences, and enjoyed

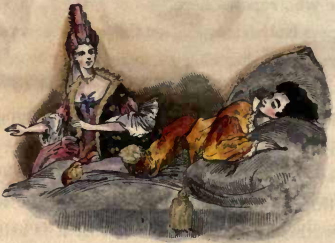


all reasonable pleasures without ever banishing that delicacy, which constitutes their principal charm; in a word, they were in all things the exact reverse of those who composed the court of his silk-winding majesty, from which the queen was one of the first who retired. She had *a very fine castle,* situated in a forest near the sea shore; this castle she chose for her residence; and having bade the king adieu, to whom her departure caused no great uneasiness, she set out accompanied by the two princesses, who were the sole fruits of her marriage with the king, and a few of her attendants, of whose zeal and affection she was assured.

The solitude of the castle did not disgust her; she embellished it by tasteful improvements and made it a charming abode by uniting within and about it some of the most beautiful objects of nature, and the most perfect productions of art. Surrounded by persons whom she loved, she enjoyed in this retirement a tranquil repose to which she had before been a stranger. The princesses also were delighted with their abode. They were fond of music, and among their train were several who cultivated that art with the most brilliant success. These two young ladies were equally beautiful in face as in figure; yet were they not equally amiable. The elder, whose name was Katherine, was proud, envious, revengeful and cruel. The younger was gentle and affectionate; and her greatest pleasure was to oblige. In her heart and in her mind she had a thousand charming qualities, which made her beloved by all who had the happiness to know her; she consequently deserved the characteristic name of Amy. She was affectionately attached to her sister, though she was not ignorant that she was disliked by her.

One day, after enduring a torrent of reproaches from Katherine, because she would not appear in an unsuitable dress at a masqued ball at which a numerous assemblage was expected, Amy took a solitary walk by the sea shore to dissipate the sorrow that her sister's ill humour had engendered. Katherine, filled with anger at her sister's non-compliance with her wishes, went also to walk in a neighbouring forest, that she might devise a dress to appear in at the ball which should eclipse in brilliancy that of Amy. Filled with these thoughts, she had walked some distance from the castle without perceiving that she had gone much further than she had intended. Weariness at length obliged her to seat herself at the foot of an old oak tree, whose foliage formed a shade impenetrable to the rays of the sun. Accidentally examining *the immense size and thickness of the trunk of this oak,* Katherine discovered a little key concealed between the bark and the wood; she took it in her hand, unable to divine what could be its use, and why it was there; and then endeavoured to replace it. After trying to do so two or three times unsuccessfully, she pushed the key into a hole that she observed; when, immediately, the key turned round of itself; a little door flew open, which was sunk in the tree with infinite art; and the door being open discovered a staircase. Katherine, curious to know where it could lead, determined to descend: the first steps were very obscure; but, as

she descended, she noticed with surprise that the staircase was lighted by numerous waxen tapers placed in rock crystal lustres. The princess continued to descend; and, having gone down more than three hundred steps, she came to a magnificently furnished apartment. It will be said, that it is astonishing and almost impossible that a young person of her sex should be sufficiently adventurous thus to enter alone into an unknown cavern; but I must inform my readers of a fact, of which I possess undoubted evidence, which will cause their wonder to cease, namely, that Katherine wore on her little finger a ring that had been bequeathed to her by her grandfather, on his death-bed, which would preserve her, until her twentieth year, from every species of danger. Persuaded, therefore, that she had nothing to fear, she walked onwards until she came to a large cabinet, or rather a store-room of rare jewels and precious stones. Katherine paused to examine the rarities she saw around her; when, her eye chancing to alight on a bed of cloth of silver standing in a kind of recess, what was her astonishment to observe, reposing thereon, the most handsome young gentleman she had ever beheld; *he seemed to be buried in a profound sleep.* Katherine approached the bed, to consider the sleeper more attentively. This curiosity cost her dearly, for from that moment she was no longer mistress of herself. Convinced (as all pretty women are) that no one could see her

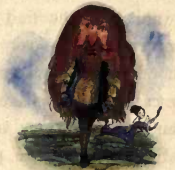


without loving her, she did not hesitate to awaken the charming unknown, with the hope of inspiring him with that tenderness which she already felt for him. Accordingly, she made a slight noise; but in passing into the next apartment, so that he might not think she had awakened him designedly. On entering this room she found a written paper containing the following words:—

"She, only, who shall be able to inspire the ugliest of mortals with the passion of love, can make an impression on the heart of the prince who reposes here."

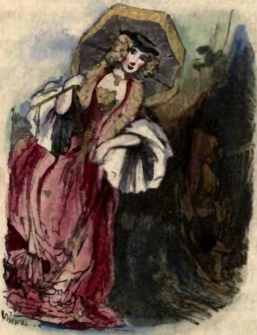
The princess Katherine perused this paper several times; and flattered herself that her charms were quite powerful enough to affect the sleeper, without her being obliged to seek out the ugliest of men, in order to inspire him with a hopeless passion. Filled with this self confidence, she was about to re-enter the cabinet, not doubting that she should find the unknown awake; when a spider's web, through which it was impossible to see any object distinctly, opposed her ingress directly she approached the door. "So slight an obstacle shall not prevent my entrance," said Katherine, and she endeavoured to pass; but, notwithstanding all her efforts, she could not succeed in lifting or breaking through the web. Astonished to find such strength in so apparently slight a fabric, she resolved to re-ascend into the forest, to return to the queen, and to have a search made for this ugliest of all ugly men, whom it was necessary to inspire with love ere she could hope to be beloved by the charming person she had just seen. Accordingly, she retraced her steps through all the apartments, ascended the staircase, passed out by the door in the tree, which was remaining open as she had left it; and no sooner was she in the open air, than the door closed of itself so effectually that she could not observe exactly where it was, nor could she find the little key again. She walked several times round the oak with this view, but she could not succeed. Desperate at this last circumstance, she turned towards the castle; and, as she was walking on the sea-shore, observed the princess Amy, her sister, attentively examining a diamond of surprising size and beauty;—a bird had just let it fall on her dress, telling her to keep it very carefully, as it would one day preserve her in a moment of great danger. Katherine, enchanted with the beauty of this admirable jewel, wished to have it in her possession; but, attempting to snatch it from Amy, she was prevented by a little man from behind her, whose frightful appearance made both the princesses take flight, and run for shelter into the forest.

The little man was three feet high; his very large and flat head was thatched with lank red hair; his eyes were sunk in in his head, and of such small dimensions that they would have been indistinguishable but for the bright red with which they were bordered; his nose was red and pointed; his cheeks hung as low as his breast, and his mouth and chin were graced by a long and bushy red beard. *His ill-shapen body was supported by a single leg, on which it was balanced as on a pivot;* but so nice was its equilibrium that the slightest breath of wind made it turn round continually, for which reason he went out in very calm weather only. He did not walk at all, but hopped with wonderful agility; and, by many little hops, he soon arrived wherever he wished to go. Katherine, recovered from the fear that the little monster had occasioned her, soon returned to him; and, in an ill-humoured tone, asked who he was, and



what could have made him daring enough to oppose her desires. "I am a powerful king," answered the deformed, "and my name is Sincere: reasons, which I cannot disclose to you, have banished me for a time from my dominions; and have obliged me to pass my time in the hollow of a rock, situated not very far from hence. I have seen you several times in this charming neighbourhood. I have frequently noticed your unkind proceedings towards the princess, your sister; and I have only just prevented another injury you would have committed in taking from her a diamond, which is her property. My natural love of justice, joined to an impulse that I dare not declare, induced me to take your sister's part, and to prevent your doing her that wrong." Katherine heard the prince's long answer to her question with extreme impatience; however, she dissembled her anger, on reflecting that the speaker could not possibly be equalled for ugliness, and that consequently she ought to neglect nothing to please him; since it was written, that on that condition only, could she inspire a passion for herself in the person whom she now so dearly loved.

Accordingly, assuming a more gentle air, she told Sincere that the rank of king, and the unfortunate condition to which he appeared to be reduced, compelled her to pardon him; that she even desired the honour of his friendship, which she flattered herself he would not refuse. She then invited him to the castle, assuring him that the queen, when she should learn his quality, would doubtless offer him apartments in which he might tranquilly reside, until fortune should cease to persecute him. The king politely thanked her; and told her that he was too well aware of his excessive ugliness to dare to flatter himself with the hope of obtaining the friendship of so beautiful a princess; or of residing at a court where he knew that the deformity of his figure could never be forgiven. Having expressed himself to this effect, the king made Katherine a bow and hopped away, sighing, and looking towards the amiable Amy, whom the presence of her sister had kept at a short distance during this conference. Amy had, however, overheard her sister's conversation with Sincere, and had been as much surprised at the affected kindness of the princess Katharine, as at her having invited him to the castle; she therefore reluctantly concluded that the princess had only assumed a show of mildness as a cloak to some wicked design. The pity that Amy felt for all who were unfortunate made her resolve immediately to warn the king that he should not place too much confidence in her sister's apparent friendship; and it was with some impatience she perceived that her engagements would compel her to defer until the morrow the execution of her project. But the next day, accompanied by a female attendant, Amy left the castle and took the road leading to Sincere's rock; at which she had nearly arrived when she heard some one singing a song, the words of which appeared to be addressed to herself. *She stopped to listen.* The tone of the voice she heard, was so melodious, and so pleased her ear, that she remained rivetted to the spot for some time after the song had ceased; until Cicely, her attendant, dispelled her reverie by informing her that Sincere was coming towards them.

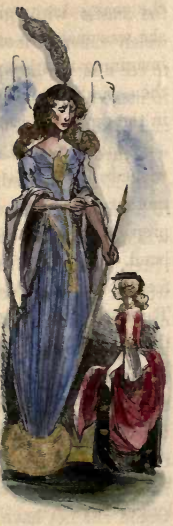


Although Amy had made up her mind to regard him without fear, she nevertheless found that she could not look upon him without trembling, and immediately turned away her face. Sincere appeared to observe her emotion with sorrow; but, saluting her very respectfully, he invited her to walk into his rustic palace to repose herself. Amy accepted his courtesy, telling his majesty at the same time that she had come purposely to his grotto that she might inform him of something of great importance. The king offered her his hand as gracefully as he could, and led her towards his grotto, entertaining her with the most lively conversation. The princess could never have imagined a person so ugly as prince Sincere with a mind so lively and penetrating. Every thing he said, too, was pronounced in a tone that so charmed the princess, that she could not help wishing over and over again that if ever she had a lover, he might be possessed of the intelligence and graceful spirit of this unfortunate. At last she came to the rock which contained Sincere's grotto. It was carpeted with soft green moss; within it was a table formed by a slab of white marble, of which nature had been the only artificer; while a bed, and a few turf seats were the only furniture that Sincere's residence contained. A cascade of fresh and pure water fell from the height of the rock, and formed a small streamlet, whose gentle murmur, with the melodious songs of the nightingales perched among the branches of an orange-tree laden with blossoms and fruit, sounded more charmingly in the princess's ears than the finest concert she had ever heard.

After praising his pleasant retreat, Amy unfolded to Sincere her reasons for paying him this visit. The prince, charmed at the interest she took in what concerned himself, was very eloquent in the expressions of his gratitude; some words even escaped him which made it sufficiently apparent that his heart was filled with the most tender love. Amy remarked them, but feigned not to understand that they were addressed to herself; and, by way of changing the subject of conversation, she informed the king with what satisfaction she had overheard a charming voice shortly before she saw him, and asked him if he were acquainted with the person who sang so well. "It is a prince who adores you," answered Sincere, "and who would make you an offer of his heart, his hand, and the crown that he will one day wear; but that his form forbids him to hope." Sincere sighed as he said these words. The princess blushed, and not doubting that it was of himself he spoke, questioned him no farther, and became very thoughtful; shortly afterwards she quitted the grotto, fearful that her absence might be noticed. She walked in the direction of the palace, observing to Cicely that she thought Sincere was a very intelligent man. "I protest, my dear Cicely," said she, "I feel for him, notwithstanding his deformity, what I never felt for any one before." "What, madam!" said the astonished attendant, "is it possible that you can regard the little monster with any other feeling than horror; nay, that you should even feel anything like affection for such a creature? Surely you could never resolve to live with him? What could you do with so hideous a being? The smallest wind makes him turn round like a weather-cock." "Ah!" said the young princess Amy, "but then he thinks with such vivacity, and speaks with so much eloquence, that I should prefer him to the handsomest man in the world. Handsome men are nearly always wretchedly stupid and too much in love with themselves; they pay greater devotion to their looking-glasses than to our sex—." The princess would have continued, but at that monent she heard a cry that stopped her; and looking on the ground, she saw, with much surprise, a white viper, darting fire from its eyes, which spoke to her as follows: "Madam, you were about to crush me beneath your feet; if I were not so forgiving as I am, I should punish you for your thoughtlessness; but I pardon you, on condition that you place me on the trunk of the large chestnut-tree near you, from the branches of which I have just fallen. One of these days I shall acknowledge the service, for I am a fairy; though, in common with all my sisters, I am obliged to quit my natural shape one day in every week, and assume that form which may be ordained by an old sorcerer, from whom we derive our power; and who punishes us in this way, for having, one day while he slept, cut off his beard and mustachios which were extremely displeasing objects. This evening I shall resume my usual form, and you will hear from me." Amy took the viper tremblingly in her hand, when it had ceased to speak, placed it on the tree, and hastily left the spot; unwilling to look again on an animal that had caused her so much fear. She then made the best of her way to the castle; where on arriving she learned, that Katharine had just despatched a courier with a message from the queen, inviting king Sincere to come and spend a few days at the palace. This at first alarmed Amy, who was acquainted with her sister's wickedness; but her uneasiness was soon dissipated, for one of Katherine's attendants, to whom that princess had confided her adventure, informed her of what had taken place in the forest.

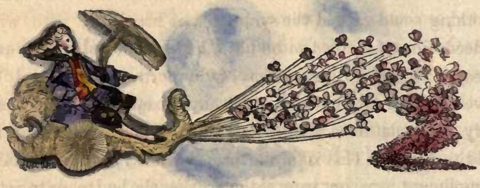
Sincere was, as you may suppose, surprised at the queen's invitation. His first impulse was courteously to refuse it; but, on reflecting that by accepting it he would be enabled to see the beautiful princess with whom he was in love every day, he resolved to set out, and hopped into a little calash that had been sent for his accommodation. His arrival was awaited at the castle with great impatience, arising, however, from widely different motives; the ladies of the court being curious to see a man who was unlike all other men; Katharine anxious to make a conquest of him, for the sake of gaining the sleeper; and Amy looking for his arrival in the hope of enabling the wretched man to pass at least some days agreeably.

At last he arrived, and was received with all the honours due to his rank. Katharine, who welcomed him very benignantly, was magnificently dressed, and looked so well that, but for her sister, she might have been pronounced the most beautiful woman in the universe. She was therefore much mortified to observe that, in spite of all her blandishments, Sincere was insensible to her charms, and that his regards were constantly directed towards Amy. Her anger was boundless to think, that having done all in her power to please the ugliest man in the world, she was yet unable to succeed. Whatever offends the self-love of the ladies is never forgiven; accordingly, she became infuriated against the prince and her sister. What would she not have given to have prevented their seeing each other! However, that was impossible; for the king being at liberty to speak to Amy, availed himself of every opportunity of so doing; while it was obvious that Amy was no unwilling auditor, and could not deny herself the pleasure of listening to Sincere.



As the princess Amy was one evening walking in an avenue in the park, she observed a ball rolling towards her very quickly: it stopped directly it was within a yard or two of her, and *opening of itself, there issued from it a little woman, who continued to increase in size until she was ten or twelve feet high.* "I am the fairy Severe," said she, addressing Amy, "whom you were kind enough to assist a few days ago." Amy recognized her, for the fairy darted fire from her eyes, as did the white viper she had placed upon the tree; and, accordingly, she saluted her very respectfully. Severe proceeded to inform Amy, that the friendship she felt for that princess had induced her to demand her hand in marriage of the queen, for the King of the Butterflies, her nephew, who was the most amiable man in the world. "I have just left the queen's closet," concluded the fairy, "and I have obtained your mother's consent. His majesty will arrive here in two or three days, to make you his queen." This information, which would have afforded much pleasure to many princesses, sensibly afflicted the young Amy; she was so much grieved at hearing it, that she was unable to utter a word in answer to the fairy. Severe, imagining that joy prevented her speaking, kissed her forehead; then, bidding her adieu, she re-entered her ball, which returned in the direction it had come.

At this moment, Cicely brought the princess word that the queen wished to speak with her: accordingly, she hastened to her mother, who, without giving her time to speak, ordered her to prepare herself to receive the King of the Butterflies as her husband, at the end of two days. Amy threw herself at her mother's feet, and conjured her to recal the promise she had made to Severe. The queen, however, was inflexible; she dreaded the power of the fairies; and hopeful that Severe would one day confer on her some mark of her friendship, she told her daughter that she would be obeyed. Amy dared not reply, and retired in deep affliction. Katherine, who at any other time would have been jealous of the fairy's preference for her sister, was delighted at the intended match; flattering herself that when Sincere no longer saw Amy, he must fall in love with herself. This sorrowful news was not long in reaching the ears of that unfortunate king; and it affected him to such a degree that he fell dangerously ill: meanwhile, the day arrived on which the fairy's nephew was to be presented. The queen, the princesses, and all the court went out to receive him; and had no sooner reached the terrace than they perceived afar off a very brilliant looking kind of cloud, which was rapidly approaching the castle. It immediately struck them that this must be the prince; and

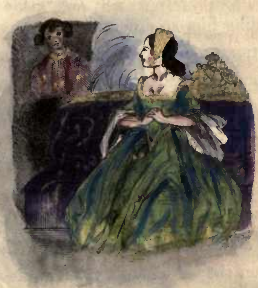


the conjecture proved to be well-founded: *the King of the Butterflies was coming, seated in a diamond chariot, drawn by upwards of ten thousand butterflies*, all of a delicate rose colour. They were harnessed to the chariot by traces of fine gold thread, interwoven with consummate skill; a hundred young lords followed their master in calashes of rock crystal, set with emeralds and rubies, drawn likewise by butterflies; but the latter were quite white. When the king's chariot arrived near the place where the ladies were standing, his majesty alighted in their presence; his suite attending him in admirable order. He was richly dressed; and never was dandy more powdered or better curled than his majesty. He must have passed at least three hours at his toilette; and his dread of disarranging his curls made him walk very gently: however, this did not prevent his appearing to great advantage; and every body admired him; the ladies making observations to each other as to the delicate whiteness of his complexion and hands. Nothing could exceed the symmetry of his shape, with which, indeed himself seemed to be not a little enamoured. He easily recognized the princess Amy, by a portrait which had been given to him by the fairy; and having approached that young lady, he made her a very formal bow, and presenting his arm, said to her: "This is not a proper place, charming Amy, to compliment you on your beauty, the air is too sultry; is it possible to converse at one's ease on a terrace, exposed to the melting rays of the sun? Therefore, let us enter the palace, and not risk our being turned as black as Ethiopians."

With these words, and almost without saluting the queen and the ladies of her suite, the King of the Butterflies turned towards the castle. Having entered, with the princess Amy and those who accompanied her, into a large saloon which had been prepared for his reception, he threw himself on a sofa; observing that he was stifled with heat; and then he lolled at full length in a position any thing but graceful. However, he was polite enough to ask the princess's pardon for his apparent disrespect, assuring her that he was in absolute want of repose; and that he must be a little cooler before he could resolve to speak to her on the important subject of his coming. Thereupon he drew sundry diamond smelling and essence-bottles from his pocket, and poured some perfume on his hands: then pulling out two or three jewelled gold boxes, he took snuff, and commenced humming a little air, which having concluded, he asked Amy whether she did not think his equipage was very splendid; and whether his dress, which he had selected from among two hundred, was to her taste; finishing, by relating to her the history of the numberless ladies who were dying of love for him.

It is easy to judge whether such topics were gratifying to the fair Amy; she who preferred wit and good sense to every charm of person; and who was quite different from the generality of her sex, on whom a magnificent suit of clothes, a dashing figure, and a few other equally worthless attractions, make more impression than an amiable heart, and an enlightened understanding. Accordingly, she conceived so great an aversion for the King of the Butterflies, that she was obliged to quit the saloon, stating that she was unwell, and retire to her apartment; there to conceal her sorrow and her tears.

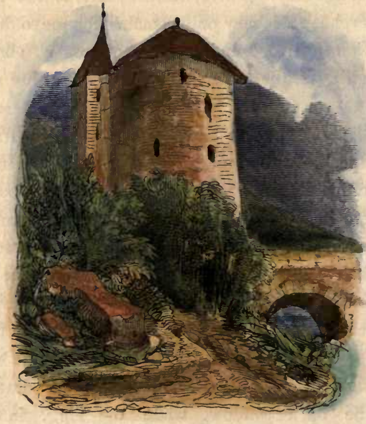
Although Sincere was unwell, on hearing of Amy's illness, he contrived to drag himself to her apartment to enquire after her health. When the princess Amy saw him, she sighed and, said: "Ah! prince, why has not the queen destined me to be your's ? Are you unable to snatch me from him to whom they would by force unite me ?" Sincere, enraptured, seized her hand, and kissing it tenderly, said : "What ! beautiful Amy, is it possible that you would rather live with me, than with a prince whose handsome face, person and manners are universally admired ? Deformed as I am, can I be so fortunate as not to be hateful to your sight ? In mercy answer me ; your reply will decide on the happiness or misery of my life." —"Yes, Sir," said the charming Amy, "know that I love you. This confession ———" She would have spoken further ; but Sincere, hopping backwards, became gradually smaller and smaller, until at last he was quite invisible. *A heavy cloud, of smoke then appeared, where he had lately stood*



which slowly clearing away, the princess discovered an extremely handsome young man, whose looks, at once majestic, benignant and intelligent, inspired her with a certain indescribable emotion, which engaged her heart in his favour the moment their eyes met. The princess Amy continued for some time to regard him with equal admiration and surprise: but her astonishment increased ten-fold when the stranger addressed to her, in the most respectful manner, the following words: "The charming avowal you have just made, madam, has for ever ended my enchantment. I am that prince Sincere who, under my former wretched form, was rash enough to tell you he adored you." Amy recognized him by the tone of his voice, and giving vent to her joy at finding him so different from what he had hitherto appeared, she entreated Sincere to inform her how such a strange metamorphosis had been brought about. "I am the sovereign" answered the prince, "of the Island of Sincerity; and when the event I am about to relate to you happened, I was reigning over that island very peaceably, beloved by all my subjects. One day at the chase, as I was very eagerly pursuing a lion which had escaped me several times, I unconsciously lost my way. I found myself in a shady walk; when, on looking around me, I observed a woman shaped exactly, madam, as you have always hitherto seen me. I gazed on her in astonishment; and I could not forbear laughing to see her turn round on her single leg like a weather-cock. She perceived my mirth; and, in an angry voice, asked what amused me. Politeness forbade my telling her; but she pressed me so closely that I at last confessed, that her singular figure had provoked my laughter. My candour displeased her: she knit her brows; and, after throwing two or three summersets in the air, said: 'As a punishment for your insolence, I ordain that your form shall become similar to mine; and no power shall restore your proper shape, until you meet with a young princess, in whom are united wit, good nature and beauty, for whom you shall feel a violent love; and who, notwithstanding your deformity, shall be inspired with sufficient passion for yourself, to make you unasked, an avowal of her tenderness. You will, however, resume your natural form during the space of one hour every day; but it shall only take place in a certain cavern situated in a forest in the dominions of the silk-worm fancying king. I ordain, further, that you shall not be permitted to apprize any person whatever of your misfortune, until your enchantment shall be dispelled.' I listened very patiently to this threatening speech, believing that it would not be followed by any effects; but what was my grief, when, after this frightful fairy (for a fairy she was) had breathed on me, I became as mis-shapen as herself. My transformation completed, she hopped away laughing with all her might. I dared not return to my palace and state what had occurred, persuaded that I should neither be recognized nor believed. The desire I felt to recover my original form, prompted me to travel through many kingdoms and visit many courts, in hopes of finding such a princess as the fairy had mentioned; but my travels were attended by no result. I consequently grew tired of searching, and formed the resolution of leading a solitary life in some retired nook, far removed from the habitations of my fellow-men. I made choice of the rock where you visited me; and I had resided there about a year when I had the happiness of seeing you for the first time. You appeared to me a divinity; I felt that you were the only person who could inspire me with love, though I dared not hope to inspire you with that passion in return; nor could I even think it possible that you could endure to look upon me. I went occasionally to the cavern in the forest, to enjoy the satisfaction of seeing myself, for a few minutes, in my natural form, as you now see me. One day, I was surprised at being visited there by the princess your sister; for a talisman opposed the entrance of all mortals into the cavern. I feigned to be asleep, that I might avoid speaking to her, and because I felt that the moment of my restoration to my horrible shape was drawing near; and it took place the moment your sister went into the next apartment. I quitted the cavern by an avenue unknown to all save myself; Katherine, however, left it also in the same manner; for it was impossible for her to re-enter the apartment in which she had seen me.

"She completed her twentieth year while she was in the cavern, and her ring had virtue against talismans until she had attained that age only. There, dearest Amy, is the history of my metamorphosis; it now only remains for me to declare my lasting passion for you, and to entreat you to allow me to solicit your hand of the queen your mother and her majesty's permission for you to reign over my dominions, where you will find every body zealous to obtain your favour." As Sincere ceased to speak, Katherine and Severe, who had overheard the whole of his discourse with Amy, entered the room; both of them were in transports of rage: the fairy, because Amy preferred another to her nephew; and Katherine, because Sincere, in whom she recognized the charming young man she had seen in the cavern, was in love with her sister. She gave vent to her incensed feelings against the two lovers in a torrent of abusive language; but Severe terminated the dispute by seizing the unfortunate Amy by her flowing ringlets and dragging her through the open window, while the king, in despair, was unable to offer the slightest opposition. The miserable Sincere immediately rushed out of the palace, in spite of Katherine, who would have detained him; and without knowing whither he went, he hastened onwards, resolved to take no repose until he should have recovered his dear princess.

The King of the Butterflies, on being informed of what had transpired, laughed heartily: he thought it a very good joke, and returned to his kingdom. Meanwhile, his good aunt

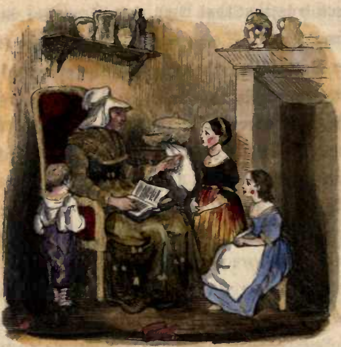


dragged Amy along at immense speed; and, after scaling many steep rocks and traversing many wide deserts, arrived at the base of *an old tower:* the door opened at her bidding, and she entered, pulling the princess after her. Severe made

Amy follow her into a large hall full of snails; and told her, in a shrill voice, that if she would not consent to marry the King of the Butterflies, she must, in the space of eight days, teach all those snails to dance or become herself a snail. Having made this threat, Severe flew away; and the princess gave way to a violent burst of tears, without feeling the slightest inclination to obey her. Let us leave her to weep over her seemingly hopeless task for the present, and return to king Sincere.

That prince, having passed through several kingdoms, came at last to a thick forest. On walking a short distance into this forest, he perceived a house built entirely of leaves, the door of which standing open, he saw *an old woman seated in an arm chair reading aloud to three little children.* He passed the house without stopping, or taking any notice of it, and was proceeding on his way, when the old woman called after him, crying in a cracked voice and shaking her head: "Prince, you are searching in vain; you will never meet with the princess Amy, until you shall have first found a brilliant frog; an extremely ugly woman, who is conscious of her want of beauty, and does not attempt to make conquests; and a witless man, who does not flatter himself that he is clever."

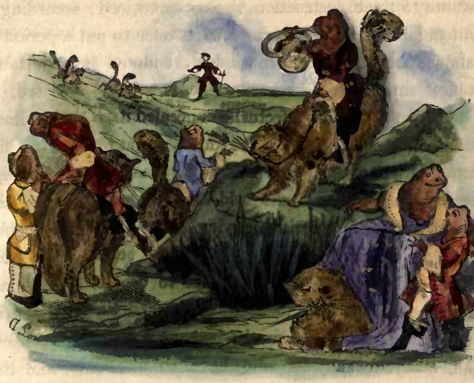
King Sincere rightly judged from these words that the speaker was a fairy; so he entreated her to grant him some



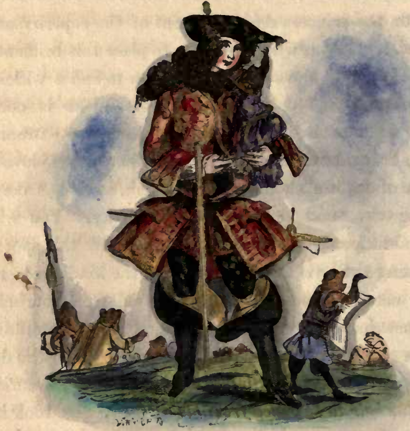
other and less difficult means of recovering his charming Amy; but she only answered him by grimaces, and burst into a loud fit of laughter.

The disconsolate prince was consequently obliged to proceed onwards, though he was extremely fatigued and very much afflicted, and quite unconscious as to the road he was taking. Before he had gone a hundred yards, he met another old woman, who asked him what occasioned his grief. Sincere informed her of his misfortunes, not omitting what the fairy he just left had said to him, and adding that he could not flatter himself with the hope of ever seeing his beloved Amy again, if it were indeed true that that happiness depended on his finding a brilliant frog. "This," said he, "appears to me to be utterly ridiculous even to seek; the two other conditions would cause me less uneasiness."—"Do not flatter yourself," said the good woman, "they are at least equally difficult to accomplish. However, by diligent searching, you may meet with all three of the required curiosities; but if at the expiration of a year, from this time, you shall not have discovered them, take my advice and trouble yourself no further, for your case will be hopeless. Go, I may not tell you more; but do not let my sister, whom you have just quitted, see you again in this vicinity: she is wicked, and you might experience some treachery at her hands. She has only informed you of the conditions on which you are permitted to withdraw your princess from her place of confinement, because she is persuaded that you can never fulfil them." The king, who had some reason to dread enchantments, hastened away as fast as he could, and travelled through every kingdom in the world, on a horse which he most fortunately found on quitting the wood. In every city, town, village, hamlet and castle that he came to, he made an indefatigable search for ugly old women and stupid men. He found abundance of both, but remarked that none of the ladies were offended with their truth-telling mirrors at the reflection of their ugliness, nay, that they all conceived it to be quite easy to render themselves still attractive by a slight and judicious use of the most renowned cosmetics. Some, whom he saw, painted an inch thick, at least; others wore sundry patches very artfully disposed; and all decorated themselves with flowers and ribands, enough to stock a milliner's *magazin*, and flattered themselves that, in spite of time, they were still very amiable, and that they might dispute the palm of beauty with the fairest and the youngest. This common effect of self-love on the sex, did not surprise the prince; he knew that all ladies are endowed from their birth with a tolerably good opinion of themselves. But what did indeed astonish him, was, that he found among the men the same self-love equally strong, and with such an addition of little weaknesses as would even make the fair sex itself contemptible. He had always heard that man was the most perfect of nature's works, and he, being a man, had given faith to the aphorism without examining it too closely; but his opinion on this subject was strangly altered by the opportunities which his travels afforded him to study this creature of perfection more attentively. He now observed that the minds of most men were occupied by trifles; that many spent their time wholly at the toilette, at table, at play, or, what is worse, in professing passion where they felt none; that others assembled in societies, not to reason with sense and propriety, but to repeat all the nonsense they had heard elsewhere, to exchange bon-mots, current in every jest-book, and to make a display of the valuable rings, jewels, and all the finery which their ill-spent incomes placed within their reach. He met with some more senseless still, who, fancying themselves extremely clever, were continually arguing without understanding what they talked about, or perceiving that they made all who were patient enough to listen to them, yawn with fatigue; with others, who were sanguine enough to hope that they were making themselves agreeable by repeating bad stories that they had already thrust upon their auditors upwards of a hundred times; while others, again, who, not letting a word fall from their lips, because they actually knew not what to say, imagined that their silence would be esteemed as a mark of wisdom. I should never conclude were I to mention all the different kinds of fools Sincere met with in his travels: yet could he not, among them all, find one such as he sought; for there was not one of them who did not think he had wit. In search of the man, the woman and the frog, he had twice travelled round the world, but each time unsuccessfully; when, beginning to lose all hope of ever finding them, he remembered what the good old woman had told him, and thought that he ought now to renounce life, since life no longer had charms for him. While absorbed in these reflections he found himself on the banks of a river. The sight of the water offered too favourable an opportunity for self destruction to pass unnoticed: accordingly, he plunged into the stream, resolved at once to put a period to an existence that his misfortunes had rendered insupportable. Instead of drowning, however, as he wished and expected, he felt himself gently sinking beneath the waters, and almost immediately alighted on a flowery turf in the middle of a fine garden. At first Sincere though he must be dreaming; but on assuring himself that he was not asleep, he arose and looked around him, in order to discover the inhabitants of these subaqueous regions. The prince walked about for some time in this solitary place; at last he heard the sound of horns and dogs, and in a moment afterwards the huntsmen burst upon his sight. Never was surprise equal to Sincere's: *the huntsmen were so many immense frogs, mounted on large green cats,* and they were in chase of a hare. Some of them were dressed in the costume of Amazons, others wore taffety gowns, and little caps on their heads decked with flowers and feathers. Several of them were sounding horns, while others were hallooing to the dogs: in a word, the sight was at once beautiful and unique. They desisted from hunting on seeing Sincere, and alighted from their cats to meet him; walking upright on their two hind legs, and using their two others as we use our arms.

When the troop arrived near the prince, she who appeared to be the mistress of the rest, very gracefully saluted him.



She wore a long purple gown embroidered with pearls and diamonds, and bore on her forehead so brilliant a mark, that the eyes of Sincere could not bear to look on it. "You are welcome, Sir," said she, "and your arrival has long been expected; we are all enchanted, and you alone can dissolve the charm. I have not been always in the condition you see me: I formerly reigned over this kingdom, and the frogs you see around me were my subjects. I had so violent an aversion to animals of the frog-kind, that I gave orders for all found in my kingdom to be put to death. Nothing was neglected that could contribute to the extirpation of these objects of my dislike; but, notwithstanding, as I was taking a walk one evening, I discovered one almost under my chamber window. I immediately called my attendants and gave orders for it to be killed; but the frog had disappeared, and had so effectually concealed itself that after the most diligent search it could not be found. I was walking the next day near the same spot, when a very ugly black woman appeared before me: in one hand she held a hazel wand, and in the other a phial full of oil, which having poured on my head, she said: 'I am the fairy Grenouilletta and the person whom you yesterday so kindly desired to be put to death; indeed, your orders have exposed me to death a hundred times. But the hour of my vengeance is arrived: become a frog in your turn, you and all your subjects who have so blindly obeyed you. I ordain that you shall remain under that shape, until a king who shall stand in need of your assistance shall in return restore you to your proper form.' Hardly had the fairy pronounced these words, when I was transformed into the creature you see. I applied immediately to a fairy who protected me, but she was not permitted to disenchant me; she described to me, however, the person of him who alone had power to do so, and told me that he had a white hair in his left eye-brow, bestowed on him by a skilful magician at the moment of his birth and which enabled him to dispel all enchantments. This fairy has conducted you hither, and it was she who, under the form of a bird, made the princess Amy a present of the superb diamond; and lastly, she it was who took care to place this brilliant mark on my forehead, and who will enable you to find a witless man who is aware of his stupidity, and a woman who is conscious that her ugliness is insupportable. These two extraordinary persons she has brought hither, fearful that the self-love which reigns in the world should corrupt them, as it has corrupted every one else, and thus destroy your hopes. You will find them in a little cabin at a short distance from this spot; but, prince, before you visit them, pray have the kindness to restore to us our natural shapes, and allow us to pull from your eyebrow the famous hair to whose virtue we owe our restoration, as it will be equally necessary to enable you to effect the deliverance of your princess." *Sincere wanted no more entreating, but suffered the hair to be pulled from his eyebrow.* He took it from the frog, and touching her and all those around her therewith, they were immediately changed into princes and princesses, very good looking and very amiable. The queen and her subjects were sufficiently eloquent in their thanks to king Sincere for his kindness. At the moment the transformation took place, the second old woman that the prince had seen in the wood appeared and told Sincere that, as a recompense for the service he had just done her friend, she would, after he had visited the



foolish man and the ugly woman, who would give him a herb that he would presently have occasion for, transport him to the place where his beautiful Amy was confined. Accordingly, Severe paid a hasty visit to this singular pair, found them to be such as he was in search of, and received from them the mysterious herb. The kind fairy then took an apple which she changed into a very pretty carriage; it travelled without horses, at the rate of three hundred miles a minute, and is supposed to have been the first steam carriage invented. She seated herself therein, and placed the prince by her side. Sincere was charmed with this wonderful vehicle, but never will carriage be made to travel fast enough for a lover impatient to rejoin his mistress. Nevertheless, they arrived, in an incredibly short space of time, at the base of the tower in which the beautiful Amy was confined, weeping over tasks impossible to perform, and which the fairy Severe had assigned her, to afford herself a pretext for tormenting the lovely princess.

We left Amy in her prison weeping over the apparently hopeless task of teaching a quantity of snails to dance; and we are now going to inform those who feel any curiosity to learn, how the princess performed that difficult exploit. For the first seven days she wept unceasingly, and gave herself no trouble about the instruction of the scholars that had been placed under her charge; but on the eighth day, which was that on which the fairy was expected to return for the purpose of changing her into a snail, should she not have succeeded, her grief was redoubled, to think of the time she had thrown away. However, she determined immediately to give the awkward animals some lessons, but soon saw that all her instructions were useless. Persuaded that her fate was inevitable, she thought seriously of putting an end to her existence, for she preferred death to becoming a snail, or marrying the King of the Butterflies. With these thoughts in her mind, the miserable Amy threw open the window with the intention of precipitating herself from it; but, fortunately recalling to her recollection at that moment the ring she had received from the bird, and the words that accompanied the gift, she drew it from her pocket, and regarding it attentively: "Beautiful brilliant," said she "if you have the power to rescue me from the danger I am in, I entreat you to put a period to my misfortunes." Directly the princess Amy had pronounced these words, the ring opened, and there issued from it a string of little dancing-masters and violin-players; the latter immediately commenced playing, while the dancing-masters arranged the snails in sets, and taught them in an instant every kind of dance: then all the musicians and the masters disappeared. This marvellous occurrence greatly comforted the princess; she wiped away her tears, kissed her ring in a transport of joyful gratitude, and concealed it more carefully than she had previously done, fearful that Severe should learn its value and take it from her.

Hardly had the princess placed her ring securely in her bosom, when the wicked fairy arrived; and asked her, with a malignant smile if her scholars were proficient in the art of dancing. "You shall see, madam," said Amy, in a mild and fearful voice; then opening the door of the hall that contained them, the princess began to sing. On hearing her voice, all the little animals began to dance, and that so prettily, especially the waltz, gallopade and saraband, that Severe became at once surprised and furious. The poor princess having succeeded so well in this, the merciless fairy gave her other and still more difficult tasks; but Amy performed them all with the assistance of her ring. Her repeated successes so enraged the fairy against her, that she shut Amy in a large iron cage; placed her in a yard full of wild and ravenous beasts; and stationed two terrible dragons to guard the door, who made frightful efforts to break open the cage and devour the princess.

The unfortunate princess had been thus confined about a month, when she saw Sincere enter the yard: he had easily obtained admission, by touching the door with his herb. Amy shuddered at the danger to which her lover was exposed. Directly Sincere saw his mistress in that cruel situation, he put his hand on his sword with the intention of slaying the two dragons; I say put his hand, because, ere he had time to draw it, the good fairy who had conducted him thither, desired him to hold; and to touch them only with the herb, which he held in his left hand. Sincere did so, when the dragons immediately fell dead at his feet; and touching the door of the cage with the charmed hair of his eye-brow, he instantaneously felt himself, the princess and the kind fairy ascend into the air surrounded by a fleecy cloud, which speedily conveyed the trio to the Island of Sincerity.

The king was immediately recognized by his subjects, who testified such joy at their sovereign's return as showed how severely they must have felt his loss, and how dear he was to them. For his part, in ecstacy at finding himself again with his beloved, he said to her the most passionate things, to which Amy replied with a tenderness quite equal to his own. Sincere instantly despatched ambassadors to the court of the silk-worm-fancying king, to demand the princess in marriage. The ambassadors were not long in executing their commission. On their return, they brought intelligence that his silk-worm-fancying majesty had blown his brains out with a pistol, about twelve months before, in consequence of being unable to wind an exceedingly entangled skein of silk; that the queen had died six months afterwards of the small-pox, and that Katherine had poisoned herself on the day of Sincere's departure in search of his mistress. The princess Amy was very much afflicted on hearing this sorrowful news, and immediately went into mourning for her parents and sister, which she wore for six months. At the expiration of that time she married king Sincere, and they lived together for a long series of years, without experiencing the slightest misfortune, or ceasing to love each other as tenderly as on the day of their wedding.

The beneficent fairy then set out from their court to rejoin queen Brilliant, her friend; and the hair of the king's eyebrow, which had been to them of such assistance, was set in a golden ring, which Sincere wore ever afterwards on the third finger of his left hand, to preserve him from the malice of fairies.

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